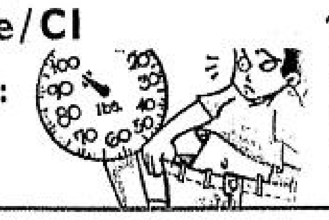
- **Real Estate / B4**
  Condo rising in Bonifacio Global City

- **Across / A15**
  Duterte campaign stopped by NPAs

- **World / A10**
  Ireland bans smoking in restos, pubs

- **Lifestyle / C1**
  Weight loss: pounds or inches?



Tanong ng Bayan / **A11**
Family planning: Mali ba ang simbahan?
NGAYONG ALAS-10 NG GABI

Loren-Noli election fight gets personal

By Carlito Pablo and Mei Magsino
Southern Luzon Bureau

NOW FOR the latest twist to the enduring words, "*Walang kama-kamag-anak* (No favors for relatives)!"

Possibly the most resolute adversary of ad-

LOREN-NOLI / A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph   Tuesday, March 30, 2004 ★★ 42 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 113   P18   website: www.inq7.net

'Joke, joke, joke?' Palace not amused

By Juliet Javellana, Cynthia Balana and Christine Avendaño

NAGHANAP NG KATAPAT PARA KAY TONTO

"JOKE, joke, joke?"

Malacañang is not laughing.

Comedian Dolphy's re-

JOKE, JOKE/ A8

BID TO AVERT TRANSPORT STRIKE

Gov't OKs 75-centavo hike in jeepney fares

JOAN BONDOC

POLITICAL COLORS
Artist Boy Reyes tries to cash in on the election campaign with his portraits of leading presidential candidates. He hopes to sell his works to campaigners from his roadside studio along Kamuning in Quezon City.

Minimum still at P4 but only for first 4 km

By Gil Cabacungan Jr., Edson Tandoc Jr. and Clarissa S. Batino

STARTING Thursday, passengers of jeepneys will be paying an additional 75 centavos for the first 5 km, an increase of about 20 percent.

The increase should only be 63 centavos but it was rounded off to 75 centavos to facilitate payment as one-centavo coins are not widely circulated.

Malacañang approved the fare increase yesterday to head off a nationwide transport strike scheduled for today by jeepney operators and drivers, who are demanding a provisional P1 fare increase and a P2.90 reduction in the pump price of diesel from P17.90 to P15 per liter.

The minimum fare is still P4, but it is good for only the first 4 km. Before, the minimum fare of P4 was for the first 5 km.

Because of the fare increase, Zeny Maranan, president of the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers of the Philippines (Fedjodap), said her group would not join the strike today.

"We are relieved. This shows that open communication still works," Ma. Elena Bautista, chair of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), said after meeting with five transport groups in Malacañang.

But she did not want to call the adjustment a fare increase.

"This is not a fare hike. This is an adjustment of the kilometer benchmark. We will come up with the new fare matrix within the week. They can round it off to

GOV'T OKS/ A4

Foes swamp GMA with all sorts of lawsuits

By Philip C. Tubeza and Michael Lim Ubac

AT THE rate they are going, President Macapagal-Arroyo's opponents may soon literally bury her in an avalanche of lawsuits.

Accusing the administration of spending public money "in a dizzying pace" to ensure Ms Macapagal's victory in the May 10 elections, opposition senatorial candidates Ma. Elisa "Boots" Anson-Roa and Amina Rasul-Bernardo yesterday asked for a temporary restraining order from the Supreme Court stopping government agencies from placing advertisements that supposedly promote her candidacy.

Government advertisement expenditures for the first quarter have amounted to around P93.3 million compared to P15 million during the same period last year, the two told the court.

They said the expenses came from the Office of the President, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Transportation and Communications, National Water Resources Board and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

The Alyansa ng Pag-Asa isn't far behind in hounding Ms Macapagal.

Its candidates for senator, Nicanor "Gat" Gatmaytan and Olivia "Bong" Coo, said they would file with the Commission

FOES/ A9

Gov't loser in deal to bail out Maynilad, says ex-Neda chief

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System's own financial study warned that the government agency could accumulate a deficit of P58 billion by 2012 should it agree to the reorganization plan of Maynilad Water Services, a source privy to the negotiations told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The source also showed a study by former National Economic and Development Authority chief Felipe Medalla that said the MWSS would have a P3.8-billion exposure in the utility if it acceded to the plan. Justice Undersecretary Manuel A.J. Teehankee said the government was trying to address Medalla's concern.

Also yesterday, senatorial candidate Melanio Mauricio charged President Macapagal-Arroyo, several high government officials and owners of Benpres with economic plunder in connection with the "bailout" of Maynilad. Although criminal charges could be filed against the President, these could proceed against Ms Macapagal only after her term of office.

The MWSS and Maynilad reached a compromise agreement this month to end a legal dispute, which started after the utility announced that it was ending its 25-year concession agreement with the MWSS. Under the deal, Benpres, the holding firm of the Lopez

GOV'T LOSER/ A4

One of 6 RP 'terrorists' recalls hijack

(Editor's note: The author covered the hijacking for the pre-martial law Manila Chronicle.)

By Ricardo S. Malay
Contributor

THIRTY-THREE years ago today, six young Filipinos stole an airplane and began a quest to set right the wrongs of Philippine society their way.

That day changed their lives forever.

Fired by idealism and a sense of adventure, six students of the Mindanao State University boarded a Philippine Airlines BAC-111 flight on March 30, 1971 and ordered the pilot to head for China. Their mission: to seek revolutionary truth.

The players in the drama—the only successful hijacking of an aircraft to the People's Republic of China—were Glen Rosauro, then 20; Edgardo Tigulo, 18; Domingo

ONE OF 6/ A4

THE CHARM OFFENSIVE

ELECTION 2004

JUNJIE MENDOZA, CEBU DAILY NEWS

PLAZA INDEPENDENCIA, CEBU CITY. Bro. Eduardo "Eddie" Villanueva gets a haircut, but no hair dye, gel or spray net. He now wears pastel pin stripes in his casual sorties and a barong Tagalog on formal occasions. The peace sign stays.

A miracle: Bro. Eddie agrees to makeover

Editor's Note: The INQUIRER *continues a series of essays on the campaign style and impact of the five presidential candidates, a two-parter for each in alphabetical order.*

By Elvira Mata
Desk Editor

(Last of two parts)

EDUARDO "Bro. Eddie" Villanueva, the evangelist who wants to be president of the Philippines, needed a makeover.

It wasn't going to be easy. He refused to hide the grey on his temples, use gel or spray net to keep his hair tidy, or cover the acne scars on his face with foundation.

A MIRACLE/ A8

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2004
E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly over Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/03/30/04

Palace admits knowing Ho's host

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AFTER SAYING they had never heard of him, Malacañang yesterday confirmed that Dan Roleda was indeed a presidential adviser, when he welcomed Asia's gambling mogul Stanley Ho to Clark, Pampanga, last week.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said Roleda was appointed presidential assistant, not adviser, on foreign investments on March 4, or just days before Ho arrived to receive an honorary doctorate degree from the Angeles University Foundation.

"We've confirmed that Dan Roleda is a presidential assistant on foreign investments; I believe he was formerly a councilor in Manila," Saludo said.

Saludo and presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said over the weekend that they had never heard of Roleda.

"Dan who? First time I heard the name," Bunye said on March 27. Bunye had suggested that Roleda, who arrived in Clark in a government helicopter, could well have been a "sexual adviser."

"We call on them if we need their f_ing advice," Bunye had said in a phone interview.

Unlike a presidential adviser who has Cabinet rank, a presidential assistant's position is equivalent to a department undersecretary, Saludo said. Presidential advisers and assistants are under the Office of the Executive Secretary but they can report directly to the President.

Saludo said Roleda had not cleared his decision to welcome Ho with President Macapagal-Arroyo. But he practically justified Roleda's move. "Welcoming Ho seems to be part of what he does as part of his function to promote foreign investment," Saludo said.

Ho brought a floating casino to Manila from Hong Kong on Dec. 31, 1999 but never got to inaugurate it because of strong opposition from various groups. His investments in BW Resources, a listed gaming firm, triggered a rise and collapse of its stock in the biggest insider trading scandal in the country.

"As far as I know, there was no business transacted with Mr. Ho. It was just pure courtesy and certainly within his function as presidential assistant on foreign investments," Saludo said when asked if there was no impropriety on Roleda's part as Ho's former private lawyer.

However, there was no meeting between the President and Ho, and no business deals with him, he stressed.

Saludo had said that bringing Ho here in the middle of the President's campaign would be politically embarrassing because of Ho's background as a gambling czar.

He even took to calling the businessman Dr. Ho. "In fact, when I was living in Hong Kong, we would refer to him as Dr. Ho," Saludo said.

Ho's brief visit did not go unnoticed by deposed President Joseph Estrada, now detained at Camp Capinpin, Tanay.

In a phone call to the INQUIRER on Sunday, Estrada claimed that apart from spending government funds, the First Family was also about to enrich itself by aligning with people with "questionable" business interests like Ho, Lucio Co, known as the country's "chicken king," and cigarette and beer magnate Lucio Tan.

All three were his friends when he was President, but Estrada said he had never been close to Ho, and admits meeting him in the Palace only once.

"*Sila ang dapat dito sa kulungan* (They should be the ones in jail)," he said. "*Nilustay na nila ang pera ng gobyerno sa kampanya, gusto pang kumita*" (They have spent government funds for the campaign, they also want to profit in the process).

While Ho had been dragged into the BW scandal, Co was suspected of smuggling chicken parts, fake canned goods and cigarettes, among other things. He was also Estrada's alleged front in the Fontana Resort in Clark, Pampanga.

Tan, on the other hand, reportedly used his ties with Estrada for a favorable court ruling on his tax cases.

Like Tan, Co has not been visited him since his ouster, Estrada said, adding that Co is often seen playing golf with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

The three tycoons are alleged to have access to the Macapagal administration and are said to be among the top campaign contributors to the President's campaign fund. *With Armand N. Nocum*

Roco camp decries 'snub' by media

By TJ Burgonio

THEY'VE been out in the streets for the last 45 days, pumping the flesh, getting sunburned and losing weight.

And media hardly noticed.

Alyansa ng Pag-asa standard-bearer Raul Roco and his ticket have complained that they're not getting "fair play" in the media unlike President Macapagal-Arroyo and actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Jaime Galvez-Tan, Roco's campaign adviser, yesterday called attention to the "deterioration in the fairness" of media coverage of Roco, his running mate Herminio Aquino and their senatorial slate.

"I noticed that during the first week of the campaign—I'm speaking of TV initially—every candidate had one minute of air time (which showed) where the candidates went and what they were doing," he said in an interview.

But in the succeeding weeks, Tan said, TV allotted more air time for Ms Macapagal and Poe, and less time for Roco, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva.

"I see a deterioration of fairness in the media coverage," he said, admitting that he shared the view of Melinda de Jesus of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility on the "uneven coverage" of the presidential candidates.

Tan, a former health secretary, observed the same thing in print coverage, noting that except for a few, the local papers do not give equal space to the presidential candidates.

"There's one paper which has stories on the four candidates almost everyday. Each candidate has his own share of the front page. The others are very selective. There are papers where you don't even see the names of your candidates," he said. "It's as if nothing happened that day."

Despite this, the candidates are pressing ahead with their campaign sorties.

"The morale of the candidates is there," Tan said. "When they go out in the field, they see throngs of people. They feel the energy of the people when they are well-received."

Tan said it was "a big plus" that the INQUIRER has given a forum to the candidates so they can present their platforms of government in the section "Talk of the Town." It has also been coming out with feature stories on each candidate.

"Can this be done by the others? So far, the only papers that have this kind of framework are the Bulletin and INQUIRER," he said.

Tan voiced the hope that the INQUIRER and other media outfits would come up with updates on the platforms of the candidates, if there are any, so the electorate would be better informed.

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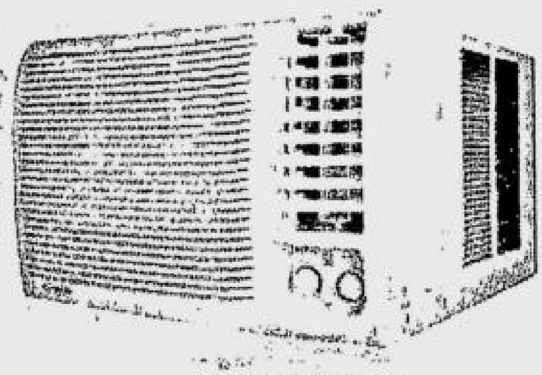

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GMA seeks Republican apology

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has demanded an apology for a US Republican voter survey that included the Philippines in a list of countries that aid terrorists.

In a statement, Ms Macapagal said: "If this report is true, I would like the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) to demand an apology for the unfair and baseless accusations that we belong to a list of countries harboring terrorists."

The survey by the National Republican Congressional Committee asked voters: "Should America broaden the war on terrorism into other countries that harbor and aid terrorists such as Thailand, Syria, Somalia, the Philippines, etc.?"

The President said the "premise of this question is fallacious and the survey question itself reflects irresponsibility."

Thailand has likewise criticized the question as "misleading."

In Washington, NRCC spokesman Carl Forti said the survey question was based on information from the Council on Foreign Relations, a nonpartisan think tank based in New York. "I think the question probably could have been vetted better," he said.

The council's Sharon Otterman did not agree with the question's wording. She said the group's Web site identifies the Philippines as a "haven" for terrorism, "but it doesn't mean the state is helping the terrorist groups." *With reports from AP and AFP*

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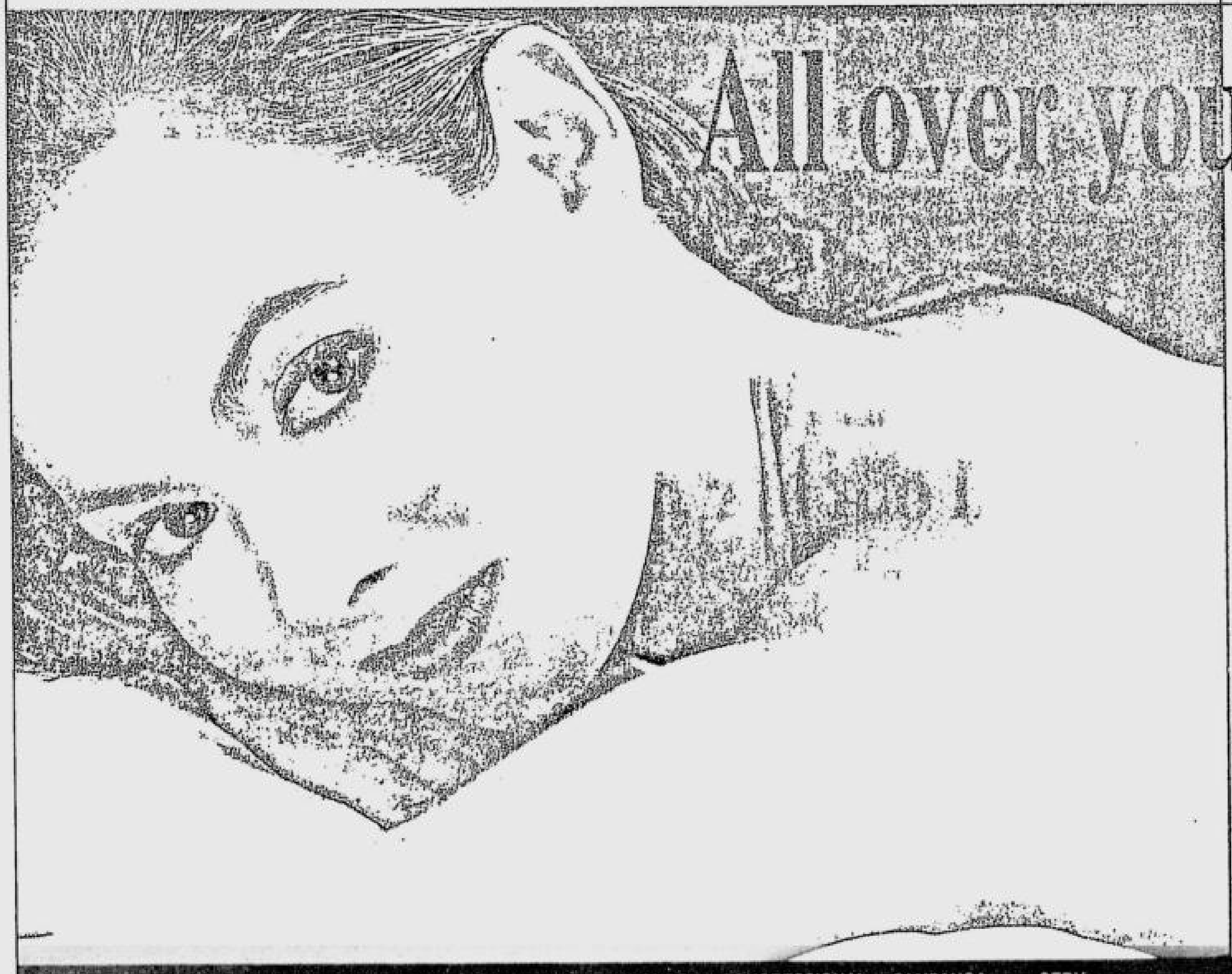

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One of 6 RP 'terrorists' recalls hijack

From page A1

Baskiñas, 19; Edgardo Mausisa, 19; Daniel Lobitaña, 25, and Fructuoso Chua, 28.

In late 1970, Rosauro and Chua had been spending sleepless nights wrestling with the demons of graft and corruption, the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, the country's colonial relationship with the United States, and the Marcos regime's festering neglect of their native Mindanao.

"We wanted to learn the theory and science of revolution, to train in military warfare so we could match the wits of graduates of the Philippine Military Academy and West Point," says Rosauro, then a political science student.

"We saw victory in the battlefield as the final solution to the nation's crises, not the demonstrations and protest marches. The time had come to stop barking and start biting. Our vision was to see the Filipino people liberated from poverty, injustice and foreign domination."

In late-night talks, Chua, the son of an MSU dean, brainstormed the idea and considered a menu of options to achieve their objective. Their decision: hijack a plane to the Soviet Union, North Korea, North Vietnam, Cuba or China—socialist countries that fired their imaginations.

LOBITAÑA

BASKIÑAS

ROSAURO

MAUSISA

TIGULO

CHUA

'Revolutionary truth'

In 1952, Chinese fugitive Ang Chio Kio's attempted hijacking to China of a PAL domestic flight failed when Taiwanese Air Force jets forced the pilot to land at a Taipei military base.

Rosauro eventually settled for China for "its proximity to the Philippines and besides, *nababasa namin ang* Cultural Revolution (we were reading about the Cultural Revolution)."

The two plotters recruited four schoolmates, who also happened to be casting about for "revolutionary truth."

Four months after hatching the plan, the six headed for Cebu, where their measly budget bought them three Danao-made revolvers, a *balisong* and a pair of scissors. The last item was for cutting up rope in case they needed to tie up any uncooperative passenger—"*kung meron mang papalag* (in case anyone resisted)."

Arriving in Manila, the six purchased tickets with their dwindling funds for a PAL jet flight to Davao City.

As soon as the team boarded the plane, they fanned out into three groups occupying the front, middle and rear sections. Twenty minutes after takeoff, as the plane caught the sunrays of the Romblon skyline, Lobitaña barged into the cockpit and ordered Capt. Antonio Misa at gunpoint to turn around and hightail it to China.

Onward to China

If the veteran pilot felt any apprehension, he showed none. Instead, he good-naturedly executed a 360-degree turn as Rosauro announced over the intercom: "We are going to China, but please be calm and cooperative. We will do you no harm."

The hijackers told the flight attendants to hand out snacks and blankets and allow the awe-stricken 40-plus passengers trips to the toilet. Mindful of their conduct, they used "*ho*" and "*po*" as they talked with the hostages.

Misa bargained with the students to allow him to refuel in Hong Kong. They agreed.

At the Kai Tak International Airport, Rosauro espied British commando helicopters approaching the refueling jetliner. He ordered the pilot to warn the assault team not to come near the aircraft. The Britons understood that the young Filipinos meant business, and backed off. Meanwhile, half of the passengers were allowed to disembark, mostly women and the elderly.

The plane entered China's airspace after a few minutes and was guided by Chinese Air Force jets to White Cloud airport in Guangzhao (Canton). A military team came aboard and confiscated the hijackers' firearms, as well as those of three other passengers.

'So young, so brave'

When the jubilant six stepped onto the tarmac, a People's Liberation Army officer, accompanied by aides and an interpreter, shook their hands and said: "So young, so brave." The PAL jetliner was allowed to return to the Philippines the next day.

After spending the night in a military barracks, the hijackers were brought to the Hengyang state farm in the south-central province of Hunan for their orientation to "socialist life." They joined the peasants working the paddy fields and raising fruit trees.

Before long, one of them ("the most undisciplined among us," says Rosauro) breached the local hospitality—he easily seduced a comely high school student who was working at a nursery. The five comrades were aghast when the Chinese discovered his nocturnal trysts with the girl.

Following the Maoist practice of criticism and self-criticism, they extracted a promise from their errant member to behave properly in a society where sex offenders were dispatched with a single shot to the head.

Recalls Rosauro: "The Chinese handled the incident with tact and diplomacy, as if our companion's crime meant nothing to them. They told us, 'We know you come from a capitalist society and we understand that these things happen. But you are young and idealistic. Maybe it will do you good if you saw our tourist attractions, museums and cultural presentations.'"

It was their first taste of problem solving, Chinese style.

After a year of *laodong* (physical labor), the six, sporting baggy proletarian clothes and crewcuts, were brought to Beijing for their ideological "remolding." Party-screened teachers conducted lessons in Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in the morning and basic Mandarin (*putonghua*) in the afternoon. The classes followed the instruction template of discussing the Selected Works of Chairman Mao, the importance of linking theory with practice, and the relevance of proletarian internationalism.

Their request for military training was turned down with the explanation that "China does not export revolution." Instead, having acquired fluency in Mandarin, they could further their education in fields of their own choosing.

"We had different interests," Rosauro says. "I enrolled in a formal language course."

Chua trained in an electrical factory, Lobitaña took up medicine at Beijing Medical College, Baskiñas studied machine design engineering at Qinghua University, Mausisa pursued electrical engineering at Fudan University, and Tigulo went to the Beijing School of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

From Mao to Arafat

In the mid-seventies, Mausisa and Tigulo were invited by their Palestinian classmates in Beijing to join the progressive forces in the Lebanon civil war. Mausisa was assigned to the technical department of the Palestine Liberation Front, "reporting directly to Yasser Arafat," says Rosauro.

Tigulo, who had been joined by University of the Philippines activist Rey Tiquia, another traditional medicine graduate, tended to the sick and wounded as Red Crescent members. The three volunteers wound up their service after two years and returned to the Chinese capital, then experiencing a short-lived "democratic space" under Deng Xiaoping's tutelage.

Their other comrades, meanwhile, were honing their newly minted skills working in various professions.

In the late seventies, the six began preparing for their return to the Philippines. Then President Ferdinand Marcos' son Bongbong had offered to secure their safe passage home but they would have no truck with the regime.

In batches, they tried to sneak into the Manila International Airport, where intelligence agents arrested Rosauro and Chua, the first arrivals. They spent four years at the Bicutan detention facility with other political prisoners.

Tigulo was captured in Bicol as a suspected New People's Army medic and later released.

No regrets

Thirty-three years after commandeering the PAL plane, Rosauro, now 53, turns reflective: "We have no regrets. We had a headful of dreams for our suffering people. But after our China sojourn, we came to realize that we could better serve our people, not necessarily through a violent revolution, but by sharing our learning curves with them."

"Our experience, however, imbued us with a socialist perspective—to serve our country and people wholeheartedly."

Filipinos, he adds, can learn many lessons from Chinese history. "But not all food on the banquet table is meant to be eaten. We must apply what is useful to our specific condition and reject what's not."

Rosauro, his hair now thinning, makes a living as a Mandarin tutor to workers bound for Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong. He also gives language lessons to departing businessmen eager to prospect the China market. He also did a lecturing stint at the UP Asian Center.

Tigulo is a consultant of the Department of Health, specializing in traditional Chinese medicine. He is based in Cagayan, where he conducts seminars on "*tuina*" massage.

Chua sells low-cost products from his farm in Davao del Sur. Lobitaña is an OB-Gyne specialist in Australia serving the Filipino community. Mausisa is in Belgium doing international work for the Philippine Left. Baskiñas is unaccounted for.

They had been called the original "terrorists," but they insist they only wanted to find a road map to their socialist dream.

Their journey of a thousand miles began with a single step of finding their true selves.

Gov't OKs 75¢ hike in jeepney fares

From page A1

75 centavos provided it is okay with their passengers. But as far as the government is concerned, what we approved is only 63 centavos," Bautista said.

Besides the fare increase, jeepney drivers and operators will be given a P2 discount on diesel at certain gas stations. Jeepney drivers will also be given a special permit to go outside their routes to gas up in the few stations which offer the discount.

"These are just bridge measures as we continue to hear the petitions for a fare hike," Bautista said. The LTFRB is hearing a two-year-old petition by jeepney groups for a P1.50 fare increase.

Fedjodap and four transport groups—the National Transport Workers Union, Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organization-Alliance of Concerned Transportation Operators, Makati Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association, Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association—met with Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and Bautista in Malacañang for three hours.

Strike to push through

The Pagkakaisang Samahan ng Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (Piston), which did not attend the meeting, said it would push through with the transport strike today.

"We're sick and tired of negotiating with the government. Unless it (government) approves our demand for a P1 provisional fare hike, the strike will go ahead as planned," Piston national chair Medardo Roda said in Filipino.

Roda said the strike was aimed at completely paralyzing jeepney transport in Metro Manila and other key cities. He made the statement before Malacañang announced the fare increase.

Jeepney groups in the cities of Iligan and Malolos staged a strike yesterday. Even then, the effect was very minimal, according to the Philippine National Police.

"No commuter was stranded because police and local governments provided ample transportation," the PNP spokesperson, Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, said.

Goltiao said 50 percent of jeepney drivers did not ply their routes in Iligan and 25 percent of drivers in Malolos, Bulacan, joined the strike.

But reports reaching the INQUIRER showed that the public transport system was paralyzed in Iligan as more than 1,000 drivers of public utility vehicles joined the strike.

The drivers started their protest by setting up barricades using tires at seven points along the major thoroughfares, particularly the national highway.

They deliberately blocked half of the four-lane national highway to hinder the flow of vehicular traffic.

The protesters also called on tricycle and taxi operators not to ply the national highway.

Felix Sialana, a member of the governing council of Coalition of Lanao Utility Transport for Change (CLUTCH), said the protest would last for three days.

Not enough to feed family

Jeepney driver Cirilo Belibestre, who joined the protest action, complained of the slow adjustment in fare rates as compared to the surge in fuel prices.

He noted that when the price of gasoline rose to P13.90 three years ago, the government allowed a fare increase.

"Now, the fare remains the same but gasoline is at more than P24," Belibestre said. Because of the high cost of fuel, a driver nets only P80 to P100 a day, which is not enough to feed a family, according to CLUTCH.

Goltiao said the PNP would not let its guard down, considering that the "main" transport strike in Metro Manila and other key cities nationwide was expected today and tomorrow.

President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the police to exercise "maximum tolerance" in dealing with the striking jeepney drivers and operators.

"We shall deal with them with maximum tolerance, the rule of law and principled negotiations with all affected sectors," the President said in a statement.

But she cautioned the leaders of the striking transport groups to keep their members in check. "Protesting leaders must police their own ranks and refrain from harassing those who would not join them," she said.

Crippled

Jeepney drivers in Marikina City warned of a strike that would cripple at least 90 percent of public transportation in eastern Metro Manila.

"We are joining the strike," said Jerry Pantaleon, treasurer of the Marikina Pasig Pateros Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association.

When the group joined a strike in July last year, it crippled 95 percent of public transportation not only in Marikina, but also in Pasig, Antipolo, Cainta and other Rizal towns.

In Laguna, jeepney drivers and operators plying the Sta. Cruz-San Pedro and Sta. Cruz-San Pablo City routes said they would take part in the protests.

Two drivers of jeepneys plying the University of the Philippines Los Baños-Calamba City said about 600 registered passenger jeepneys plying the route daily would stay away from the streets.

Two transport groups in Cebu are also joining the nationwide strike today. The Nagkahiusang Drayber sa Sugbo (Nadsu) and the Mandaue Operators Drivers Association (Moda) said they would not ply their routes starting at 1 a.m.

Nadsu claimed it had at least 5,000 member-drivers plying 33 different routes in Cebu province, especially in Metro Cebu. Moda is composed of drivers and operators based in Mandaue City.

A drivers' organization in Negros Occidental is also joining the strike. The United Negros Driver's Operators Center (Undoc) earlier said members were joining due to the failure of the administration to heed their demands.

In General Santos City, Roy Sande, chair of the Transport Integrated Restructuring and Economic Services, told reporters his group was expecting a much bigger protest as more drivers signified their intention to go on strike. *With reports from Tina Santos, Christian V. Esguerra and Luige del Puerto in Metro Manila; Romulo Ponte and Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau; and Ryan D. Rosauro and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gov't loser in deal to bail out Maynilad—ex-Neda chief

From page A1

family, would write off its holdings in Maynilad, its joint venture with the French firm Ondeo Services. The plan also provides for the conversion of Maynilad's unpaid concession fees of about P8 billion to the MWSS into equity, giving the MWSS majority control of Maynilad.

The source said that a study conducted by the MWSS finance department, headed by Lito Follosco, showed that the MWSS could have a projected P58,735,080 in "free cash" gross deficit in eight years under Maynilad's proposed reorganization.

A cash flow statement from Follosco's office showed that the MWSS would start having a P313.9 million free cash deficit by 2006. It also projected that the MWSS would be in the red for the next six succeeding years. "[The] MWSS does not expect any cash inflow from Maynilad while it shall shoulder all maturing obligations (of Maynilad)," the source said.

The study said the MWSS would have to pay Maynilad's foreign loans in the coming years—P2.3 billion this year, P2.5 billion in 2005; P2.1 billion in 2006, R2 billion in 2007, P1.8 billion in 2008, P1.8 billion in 2009, P1.6 billion in 2010 and 2011, and P1.8 billion in 2012. The MWSS would also pay Maynilad-related obligations for charges and interest on bridge financing loans. From 2005 to 2010, the government agency would pay P1.14 billion yearly, according to the study.

The source said that while the loans Maynilad incurred while it was under the Lopezes did not have sovereign guarantees, the government would have to pay for these if it took over the water utility. "How could government allow Maynilad to default on these loans when it (would) own 63 percent of the company?" the source said.

Medalla said drawing from the $120 million performance bond posted by Maynilad, if possible, was "superior" to the proposed deal. "The proposal is clearly unattractive if it is possible to draw on the bond and the proceeds from the draw do not become debts of the future operator."

He said that agreeing to the plan would lead to a P3.85-billion exposure for the MWSS. The source said Medalla was referring to the P3.85 billion in common equity that MWSS would get in the new Maynilad. He said the value of these stocks could be wiped out if the new Maynilad continued to founder.

"The fact that the residual company would have P757 million less total liability due to partial write-offs of payables of Maynilad to its sponsors (Benpres Holdings and Ondeo) cannot compensate for the fact that MWSS exposure would be P3.85 billion greater," the former Neda chief said.

"Thus, even if not a single peso of the payables to sponsors is written off and all the proceeds of the bond draw are treated as debts of the residual company, the proposal is still inferior to drawing under the performance bond," he said.

Medalla said terminating the concession agreement and drawing all of the $120 million bond, with the proceeds not becoming debts of the new Maynilad, would be "clearly better" than the reorganization plan. However, Medalla said that if the bond could eventually be drawn only after several years, then the proposed plan "is better than the status quo" because a prolonged stalemate "is bad for the financial position of MWSS."

The government had said that it entered into a deal with Maynilad to avoid years of litigation. "Every year that passes results in more than a billion pesos of foregone revenue that can be used to pay concession fees. Also, to the extent that prolonged uncertainty reduces productivity, every year of delay would represent lost cash generation that can be used to pay concession fees," he said.

The public has every right to know why the government has to bail out Maynilad, according to Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion. Tehankee said the government would ask the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to make public the details of the deal. He said the details might be released in "a day or two." He said the court had given interested parties 20 days to make constructive suggestions on how to improve the agreement. *With reports from Abigail L. Ho, Martin P. Marfil and Michael Lim Ubac*

90 local bets bolt K-4 for Poe's side

By Cynthia D. Balana, Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau and Christine O. Avendaño

ABOUT 90 local officials consisting of congressmen, governors and mayors from the administration coalition K-4 yesterday abandoned President Macapagal-Arroyo and defected to the camp of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

In a meeting at the Club Filipino in San Juan, local leaders from the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, Nationalist People's Coalition and Liberal Party agreed that they had better chances of getting elected with Poe.

Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras said he resigned from Lakas last week and told Speaker Jose de Venecia, the party president, that he was supporting Poe.

He said that about 30 to 40 other congressmen from the three political parties were also joining Poe.

Among the congressmen present in Club Filipino were Alfredo Maranon (Negros Occidental), Francis Escudero (Sorsogon), Jack Duavit (Rizal), Emilio Macias (Negros Oriental), Darlene Custodio-Antonino (South Cotabato), Arthur "Dodo" Pinggoy Jr. (South Cotabato), Enrico Echeverri (Caloocan City), Chuck Mathay (Quezon City) and Joey Hizon (Manila), Jose Apolinario Lozada (Negros Occidental), Gregorio Ipong (North Cotabato), Perpetuo Ylagan (Romblon), Jose Solis (Sorsogon) and Harlin Abayon (Northern Samar).

Also there was Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, a senatorial candidate of the Peoples' Power Coalition of President Macapagal in the May 2001 polls, who is now with the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino. The former chief of the Bureau of Internal Revenue in President Fidel Ramos' administration is now running for congresswoman in the lone district of Camarines Norte.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the KNP was expecting one or two leaders but not Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Maranon, his brother Alfredo in tow, along with Rep. Tranquilino Carmona and Rep. Genaro Raphael Alvarez.

Because of the support of the Negros leaders, the senator said that Poe is expected to win the 1.2-million voting population of Negros Island (Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental) and Region VI as a whole.

Angara said that Negros island "was effectively the (opposition's) answer to (the administration's) Cebu." Cebu, said to have a voting population of 1.2 million as well, is said to be the bailwick of President Macapagal.

But Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy, NPC chair, belittled the move of his members to jump ship, saying that an overwhelming number of the NPC's big guns were still supporting Ms Macapagal.

For his part, Lakas Rep. Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur, said the "much-hyped and poorly-attended" show of force by NPC supporters of Poe validated Dy's projection that 70 percent of the coalition partner's membership will remain with the ruling coalition.

Dolphy's sons back Bro. Eddie

SOME OF the country's veteran show business personalities came out in support of evangelist and Bangon Pilipinas standard-bearer Eddie Villanueva yesterday, polarizing the industry that had been perceived to be solidly behind actor Fernando Poe Jr. of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

The appearance of Dolphy Quizon Jr., son of comedy king Dolphy,. a staunch Poe supporter, highlighted the launch of Bangon Artista at the Music Museum, where some 100 actors, singers, directors, media people, makeup artists and cinematographers pledged support Villanueva.

"As artists, we should logically consider Fernando Poe Jr. as it would be to the advantage of our incomes and profession… We are a talented race and there are many candidates we can look up to, but we need a man we can look up with," Bangon Artista said in its statement of support.

Dolphy Jr., who was jailed for 18 years for arson and multiple homicide, recalled how Villanueva touched his life when he chanced upon the evangelist's television program in prison. It was Villanueva's invitation to come to the Lord that changed his life, he said.

Dolphy Jr. added that his brother Freddie, who could not make it to the launch of Bangon Artista, also supported Villanueva. Their father Dolphy, on the other hand, wished them well and expressed the hope that Villanueva would win if Poe did not make it to Malacañang.

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Focus on poll issues, media told

By Jerome Aning

A VISITING political science professor from the United States yesterday called on Philippine media to make its coverage of the election campaign more issues-centered so that voters could responsibly participate in the democratic process.

Stephen Farnsworth Ph.D. spoke on the role of media in the electoral process at the US Embassy's Seafront compound in Pasay City. Farnsworth is a professor of political science and international affairs at the Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia. He is also a professor of government in Washington D.C.'s Georgetown University.

Media should talk about issues and look at the campaign through the eyes of voters, who have an idea of what is to be done and how to do it. They should be asked what they think the problems are and how they can solve them. "This way, citizens are given a sense that they matter," he said.

Public debates, Farnsworth added, are a good way of determining which candidates care about answering certain issues that affect citizens.

"Debates are an effective way of ascertaining who's trying to respond to the issues and who's not. If candidates are going to dismiss the concerns of citizens (by refusing to attend debates), then the citizens are going to dismiss them," he said.

According to Farnsworth, stories on surveys should not be overplayed because they tend to cause more harm to candidates by telling voters that the race is over even before the voting starts.

He noted that in the US, as in the Philippines, television stations and newspapers have become increasingly concentrated on how the presidential race was going instead of what issues the candidates were talking about.

Farnsworth admitted that while discussions on campaign issues were generally "boring," media can make them more interesting to citizens.

Farnsworth related his experience in the former Soviet republic of Georgia, where the problem of road potholes received public interest after a newspaper promised to reward the person who could identify the biggest pothole.

Readers swamped the newspaper with "nominations" for what they thought were the biggest potholes and mathematicians from the university had to be consulted to judge which entry won.

The public reaction to the story, in turn, triggered a response from the politicians, who rushed to repair the roads.

"Civic discourse takes a little bit of power from the politicians to the citizens in their participation in the political process," Farnsworth said.

Regular pay on unworked holidays

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment yesterday reiterated that April 7 had been declared Araw ng Kagitingan and was therefore a regular holiday.

In a statement, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said Proclamation No. 583 declared that Araw ng Kagitingan which is usually celebrated on April 9 shall be marked on April 7 this year as the regular holiday falls on Good Friday this year.

Sto. Tomas said this makes three consecutive regular holidays during Holy Week and these are Araw ng Kagitingan on April 7, Maundy Thursday on April 8 and Good Friday on April 9.

In addition, Sto. Tomas said President Macapagal-Arroyo had also declared April 10 or Black Saturday a nationwide special non-working day.

For April 7, Sto. Tomas said employees shall be paid 100 percent of their regular basic wage even if the day is unworked; for April 9, employees shall also be paid 100 percent of their regular basic salary even if they do not work.

This is based on Memorandum Circular No. 1 issued on March 8 to the country's private sector employers.

The same document, Sto. Tomas said, holds that the same holiday pay uniformly applies on all regular holidays, including Araw ng Kagitingan and Good Friday and shall apply for Maundy Thursday or April 8 for all covered employees.

For Black Saturday or April 10, the DOLE said that if the day is unworked, the no-pay policy shall apply unless there is a favorable company policy, practice or collective bargaining agreement granting payment. *Martin P. Marfil*

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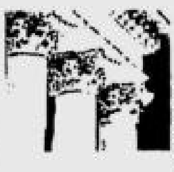
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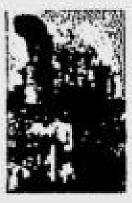

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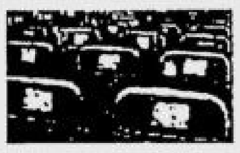

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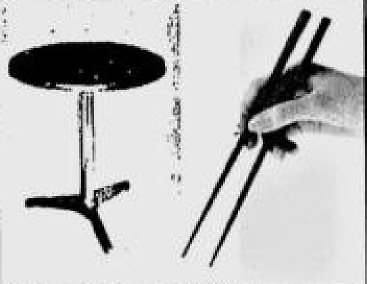

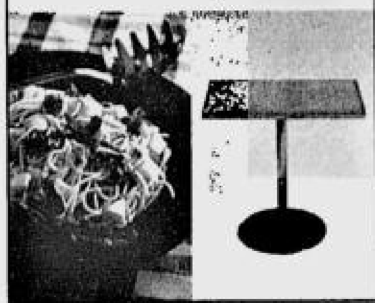

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SECURITY CONCERNS
Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Albert met in Honolulu on Saturday with Admiral Thomas Fargo, head of the US Pacific Command, on strengthening the joint annual Balikatan military exercises. On Friday Albert met with US Secretary of State Colin Powell to discuss mutual security concerns. Albert was on the last leg of a familiarization tour which also took her to Europe and Asia.

PMA cadets can vote, says AFP

By Alcuin Papa

THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines denied yesterday that cadets at the Philippine Military Academy had been blocked from voting in the May elections as alleged by presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

AFP Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero said PMA cadets were able to register with the Commission on Elections on Nov. 6, 2003 from 5 to 9 p.m.

Lucero said the cadets' registration was made through an arrangement with Baguio City Comelec officials who considered the training schedule of the academy.

"Cadets cannot just leave Fort del Pilar (PMA grounds) because of their tight training schedule," Lucero said.

He said the third and fourth-class cadets were given priority to register as voters. The first and second-class cadets were allowed to register after the upper classmen.

Lacson, himself a member of PMA Class '71, had alleged that Adan only allowed plebes, or freshmen cadets and cadettes, to be shuttled to the registration precincts during the extended registration period in 2003. He said a second-class cadet on leave had told him that only plebes were allowed to register.

Lucero also denied Lacson's claim that PMA superintendent Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan had manipulated an informal survey conducted among cadets which showed the majority supported Ms Macapagal.

Adan denied such a survey was conducted, Lucero said.

"The PMA leadership has been consistent in its policies and programs to make the academy an exemplar of an apolitical AFP unit," Lucero said.

GMA sets 'Day of Unborn'

CITING THE need for comprehensive health services for vulnerable mothers-to-be, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared March 25 of each year as the "Day of the Unborn" in the country.

Noting that almost three percent of fetal deaths in the Philippines was due to the effects of maternal health, nutrition and sociobehavioral factors, Proclamation No. 586 signed Wednesday by the President stressed the need for preventive action against anticipated complications during pregnancy and child birth.

"It is necessary that quality and timely interventions before, during and after pregnancy be developed through comprehensive health services," Ms Macapagal said.

The proclamation of the "Day of the Unborn," coincides with observance of the Feast of Annunciation in Roman Catholic countries.

Malacañang said the declaration, which was announced during a Mass at Malacañang's Heroes Hall, seeks to "promote a culture of life and defense of life from the moment of conception."

Msgr. Augusto Laban, assisted by Fr. James Reuter and Fr. Dane Clay, celebrated the Mass attended by Press Secretary Milton Alingod, Presidential Adviser on Ecclesiastical and Media Affairs Conrado Limcaoco, nuns and other members of religious orders.

Limcaoco said he suggested setting aside a "Day for the Unborn" to the President after reading about it in Zenit, a Catholic international news service.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, March 30, 2004
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Num 21:4-9
Gospel: Jn 8:21-30

Jesus said to the Pharisees, "I am going away, and though you look for me, you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come." The Jews wondered, "Why does he say that we can't come where he is going? Will he kill himself?"

But Jesus said, "You are from below and I am from above; you are of this world and I am not of this world. That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. And you shall die in your sins unless you believe that I am He."

They asked him, "Who are you?"; and Jesus said, "Just what I have told you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the One who sent me is truthful and everything I learned from him, I proclaim to the world."

They didn't understand that Jesus was speaking to them about the Father. So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing of myself, but I say just what the Father taught me. He who sent me is with me and has not left me alone; because I always do what pleases him." As Jesus spoke like this, many believed in him.

Commentary

The Word became flesh: took on our human nature and became one of us. He is fully human and belongs here. Yet in this passage he says, "I am not of this world." How are we to understand this?

The "world" in John's gospel is not the physical world, but all the forces in human life that oppose the Kingdom of God. In that sense Jesus is not from here. His opponents made that clear by crucifying him. To crucify someone was to say that he did not belong here, even as a memory. John loved to play on the double meaning of the words, "lifted up": Jesus would be lifted up in shame on the cross, but that lifting up in shame is also a lifting up in glory. God vindicated him by raising him up in glory. All the paradoxes of his life, as well as the paradoxes he spoke ("the last shall be first," etc.) are expressed in this.

But the gospel is written for us. These paradoxes are to be realized in our lives too—sooner or later, in one way or another.

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See 'Passion' with open mind—prelate

OPEN THE mind and heart to meditation, brace for graphic violence, and don't blame the Jews.

This was the advice of Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales to local Catholic viewers of the controversial film "The Passion of the Christ" which opens Wednesday in time for the Lenten season.

"Try to approach it as if you were entering a period of meditation," Rosales said in a pastoral message dedicated to actor-director Mel Gibson's controversial movie, denounced by some as anti-Semitic and praised by others for its portrayal of Christ's last 12 hours.

Influential Catholic bishops in the country say the film is a must. Rosales called it "a serious labor of love, painstakingly made, of genuine artistic and religious value."

But Rosales cautioned viewers that the Jews must not be blamed for Christ's death. The film has deeply divided religious communities in the United States and has drawn criticism from Jewish leaders who fear it will revive the notion that Jews were responsible for Christ's death.

"We are not to blame all the Jewish people ... for his death. Certainly we are not to blame the Jewish people in succeeding ages, or in our own age," he said. "All of us as sinners took part in the killing of Jesus.

"Anti-Semitism may not be justified ever... the terrible crimes anti-Semitism has led to, culminating in the Holocaust of the last century, are surely crimes in the eyes of humanity and God," he added."

Rosales also warned about violence in the movie, which he said was too graphic for children. *AP*

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CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH
Private Sector

Both the government and Maynilad should make the takeover transparent.

BACKGROUND

To make a fair and objective analysis of the government takeover of Maynilad, we met separately with the MWSS chief regulatory officer, Justice Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee, the Government Corporate Counsel and Rafael Alunan III, the former President of Maynilad.

Maynilad presented arguments that populist bias by the regulatory office prompted Maynilad to give up their water concession. The MWSS disagreed with this claim. Undersecretary Teehankee sought a "win-win" solution for all stakeholders.

OUR CONCLUSION: Transparency and full disclosure must be made by the government on its takeover of Maynilad.

- We support President Arroyo's decision that the government must protect the interest of the public to ensure water supply to consumers, especially the poor.
- The Government, however, must make public Amendment No. 2 to the 2004 Rehabilitation Plan of the Concession Agreement.
- We suggest that Judge Reynaldo Daway lift his Order making Amendment No. 2 secret so that it can be made public.

Why the agreement must be made public.

- **The government is in a conflict-of-interest situation.** The state-run MWSS is both a regulator and, at the same time, will be owning 61% of Maynilad with the government takeover of the water concession.
- **An independent auditor must be appointed.** The court should appoint an internationally accepted auditor to audit and validate the following:
  a. The financial projections in the Rehabilitation Plan for 2004 compared to the current plan before Rehabilitation.
  b. As majority owner of Maynilad, MWSS would NOW change its populist bias and would want higher water rates for Maynilad. This is to ensure that Maynilad is able to pay the Annual Concession fees of the $800 million MWSS debt which is a sovereign debt of the government.
- **MWSS must call public hearings to clarify the following:**
  1. There will be NO rate increase in the next five years (January 2003 to December 2007) except for:
     a. Annual increases in the Consumer Price Index
     b. The Quarterly Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment on forex losses/gains
     c. The remaining balance in the approved MWSS two-installment increase
  2. The 2004 Rehabilitation Plan must explain whether the following are in addition to the above item no. 1 - a, b, c.
     a. 2004 water rate increase
     b. The Special Transitory Mechanism (STM) staggered over six years which allows Maynilad to increase water rates to take care of various under recoveries from January 2004 to 2009.

Both the government and the Maynilad have to make the takeover transparent. For the sake of the Lopez family. For the sake of the government and for the sake of the public.

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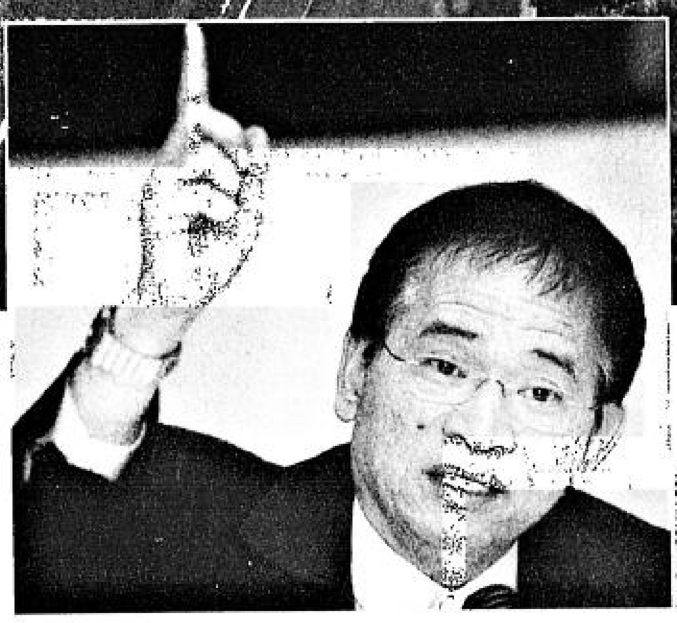
JUNJIE MENDOZA-CEBU DAILY NEWS



RANDY HORMILLOSA

EDDIE'S MAKEOVER. He has updated his glasses and trimmed his hair, but he does not want to cover up the deep scars on his face.

A miracle: Bro. Eddie agrees to makeover

From page A1

"He is the least vain person I know," said Eleanor "Joni" Villanueva-Tugna, 26, Brother Eddie's eldest daughter.

Villanueva has been known to get up from bed, splash water on his face, and head for church.

So when he agreed to a haircut by a professional stylist, it was nothing short of a miracle.

Fanny Serrano, hair and makeup stylist to the stars, like Sharon Cuneta, Zsa Zsa Padilla and Charlene Gonzales, offered to do the makeover. Tito Fanny, or TF as he is called in the biz, is a born-again Christian. He has also styled female politicians and wives of politicos, but Brother Eddie was his first "presidentiable."

TF shared this anecdote about Villanueva: "There was an article in the newspaper where a skin specialist gave unsolicited advice to presidential candidates on how to improve their looks. The specialist said Brother Eddie should get a chemical peel or "dermabrasion" to remove the deep marks on his face."

Villanueva scoffed at the advice, saying, "*Ito ang marka ng aking nakaraan, ang mga pinagdaanan ko nuong ako'y aktibista. Ayokong mawala o makalimutan ito* (These are marks from my past, what I went through as a former activist. I don't want to lose or forget that part of my life)."

The former economics and finance professor at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) was arrested twice when he was an activist. As chair of the Kabataang Makabayan, Bulacan chapter, he not only fought for the rights of workers, fishermen and farmers; he also ate, slept and worked with them.

Layered cut but no gel

Faced with the greatest quest of his life, the presidency, Brother Eddie bravely consented to a makeover. After all, he would have to be photographed for campaign posters. TF trimmed his hair, applied foundation on his face and suggested the type of clothes he should wear.

"He had unfashionably thick hair," TF narrated. "When the wind blew, it looked like he was wearing a *bunot* (coconut husk). I layered his hair, cut it short—from three inches to about an inch and a quarter. Now it doesn't look as thick, and even when the wind blows, it still looks tidy. I wish he would use some gel, though."

Who used to cut his hair?

When he found the time, he would go to a barber, Joni said, but it was usually her mom, Sister Dory, who did it.

Joni recounted: "They live in Bulacan. My mother refuses to live anywhere else. It takes them two hours to get anywhere and two hours to get back. They would leave the house very early and return really late. *Minsan, alas dos ng umaga, naggugupitan sila ng buhok* (Sometimes, they would return at 2 a.m. and my mom would trim his hair)."

TF suggested that Brother Eddie wear pin-striped polo shirts for his casual sorties, and only in pastel colors.

"I said it would distinguish him from Ping (Lacson) and Kabayan (Noli de Castro) who wear colorful checkered shirts, and (Raul) Roco who likes loud Hawaiian shirts," TF explained. For formal occasions, TF said Brother Eddie should stick to *barong*, "not suits."

Flea market wardrobe out

Joni, a University of the Philippines graduate of broadcast communications and managing director of Zoe TV, knows only too well the importance of image in a political campaign. She should be congratulated for convincing her father to replace his nerdy oversized glasses with the smaller, rimless, non-glare and more flattering specs that he uses now.

But Sister Dory picks out the shirts, Joni said. "She used to do all her shopping at the *tiangge* (flea market)!" These days, Sister Dory goes to SM and buys shirts off-the-rack.

Fortunately, the shop Onesimus, which specializes in *barong* and whose owner is a Christian, was a sponsor in "Diyos at Bayan," which Villanueva used to host on Zoe TV.

"Onesimus would give us one *barong* a month. So my dad has more or less a dozen," Joni said. "But when it's a formal and important occasion, like when he met with businessmen of Philippines Inc., I would lend him the *jusi barong* which my husband wore to our wedding," she said.

Shoes, perfume

It must be terrible to shop for an evangelist.

Does Brother Eddie have a favorite luxury item? "*Wala* (none)," Joni said. "My father is not a materialistic man. His joy does not lie in material things. Someone gave him a palm pilot once. He said he had no use for it and gave it to me. I gave him a new cell phone. He said it was too small, so he still uses his Nokia 3210. He is the hardest man to find a gift for. He doesn't want anything. He's perfectly happy with handkerchiefs and socks because these are things he can use."

What scent does he wear, then?

"He likes Escape by Calvin Klein. It was a gift."

Shoes?

Joni replied again, smiling: "It doesn't matter what brand. The first thing he does when he shops for shoes is to put his hand inside to check how soft it is. If it feels soft, he will wear it. Right now, he's wearing Florsheim. We bought him a pair of Bally shoes last Christmas, *pero hanggang ngayon hindi pa niya sinusuot. Gusto ko na ngang bawiin kasi magka-size sila ng asawa ko* (up to now he hasn't worn them yet. I want to get them back and give them to my husband because they have the same shoe size)."

Villanueva doesn't own a car, either. He goes around in an Isuzu Trooper, a Zoe company car assigned to Joni. Sometimes, he gets a ride from one of his two boys, Bocaue (Bulacan) Mayor Eduardo Jr. or the Citizen's Battle Against Corruption (Cibac) party-list Rep. Emmanuel. Edelisha, his youngest who is still in high school, commutes.

Brother Eddie has a driver, one policeman assigned to him by the government, and two volunteer bodyguards.

Close calls

Has he received any death threats?

Joni said her father has had a few close calls. Twenty years ago, she recalled, someone threw a grenade at their house. It hadn't sat well with former comrades that he left his life as an activist to become a preacher. "He was carrying me in his arms when the grenade exploded," Joni said. "I was about 5 years old at the time." No one was hurt.

Again, 10 years ago, Joni, her dad and an uncle were driving home to Bulacan. Suddenly, a car came out of nowhere and blocked their way. They saw armed men in the vehicle and Joni was certain it was their end. For two minutes, nothing happened. Suddenly, the car with the armed men sped away. In eight minutes, the Villanuevas were home. Joni was crying and shaking like a leaf.

The first miracle

More recently, when public opinion was still strongly against born-again Christians, a man called their house, refused to give his name, but told them this story: He was about to pull the trigger on Brother Eddie when his fingers froze. Experiencing a conversion, he apologized and warned Brother Eddie that his life was still in danger.

Joni's conclusion: "Angels must be watching over him."

This is a story Brother Eddie loves to tell in prayer rallies and include in his speeches.

His parents were victims of a land-grabbing syndicate in Bulacan. On behalf of his parents and 20 other victims, Brother Eddie collected evidence and filed a complaint against the syndicate, which was made up of lawyers, fiscals and judges. The case moved ever so slowly with no hope in sight. Brother Eddie thought of joining the New People's Army and having the syndicate members liquidated instead.

His sister Lenny, herself a former activist and now a born-again Christian in the United States, wrote him letters urging him to surrender himself to God, read the Bible and pray.

"I decided to give it a try. *Wala namang mawawala* (I had nothing to lose). It was better than joining the NPA," Villanueva said.

He picked up the Bible at 9 p.m. one night, and didn't put it down until 2 a.m. He didn't realize it then, but his conversion had started.

He prayed. Five days later, all the members of the syndicate were arrested.

It was a miracle. Villanueva abandoned his communist beliefs and started a Bible study class at the PUP. Soon, the Jesus Is Lord Ministry was born. Today, 25 years later, the JIL Church has three million members in 33 countries.

Numbers this big will not escape the attention of politicians. Like Bishop Eraño Manalo of the Iglesia ni Cristo and Bro. Mike Velarde of El Shaddai, Brother Eddie was soon being consulted by then President Fidel V. Ramos, President Macapagal-Arroyo, and former first lady Imelda Marcos. Even former President Joseph Estrada sought Brother Eddie's advice during his impeachment trial.

Leaving comfort zone

"It's certainly not the glory," Joni said. "By choosing to run, he has left his comfort zone to venture into something new."

When the Task Force Pagbabago first asked him to run for president, Villanueva said no and suggested other names. "They came back and said they chose me for my integrity, experience, passion and political will."

Brother Eddie agonized for four months, fasted and prayed, and realized that he was being called by God to serve the country. Against common sense and the counsel of his family, he decided to run.

"People are under the impression that we like being in politics," Joni complained. "That's not true. Politics is a dirty business. They're saying so many things about my father and it hurts the family. We miss our normal life."

With close to 8 million born-again Christians campaigning—and praying—for Brother Eddie, the presidency could just be one grand prayer rally away.

Then what?

"My mom said if my dad wins, she's not staying in Malacañang. She'll go home to Bulacan every day," said Joni. "Me? I'm staying in my house in Las Piñas."

And would Brother Eddie feel comfortable living in a palace?

A pause, and then Joni said, quite frankly: "I have no idea. I guess wherever he can do God's work."

EDDIE PRESIDENT
NANIW
NIWALA KAI
OUSNESS

EAT CROCODILE. Brother Eddie, wife Dory and local celebrities eat bread in the shape of crocodiles to symbolize their stand against corruption. Bangon Artista was launched yesterday at the Music Museum in support of Villanueva's candidacy.

JOAN BONDOC

FROM THE LEFT TO JESUS. With Bayan Muna Congressional Rep. Satur Ocampo (right). When Brother Eddie was an activist, his Bible was The Teachings of Mao Tse Tung. When he was arrested by Jesus Christ, he started teaching the Gospel of God.

JOAN BONDOC

'Joke, joke, joke?' Palace not amused

From page A1

mark on Saturday about President Macapagal-Arroyo being "*dugay na sa Malacañang, tonto pa gihapon* (still dumb after having spent much time in Malacañang)" could still end on a constructive note, according to her campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor.

Dolphy's friend, opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., should now agree to a debate with the President, Defensor said.

"*Ilabas nila 'yung programa nila at plataporma at nang malaman talaga kung sino ang tonto* (Let us see their program and platform so we can decide once and for all who is dumb)," he told Palace reporters before joining Ms Macapagal's third visit to Bacolod City since the campaign began.

Never mind that the remark had little to do with political platforms.

In a radio interview, the President's spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, sounded terse: "We did not expect such insolence. But perhaps it was just a 'joke, joke, joke' (as they say in show biz). We are definitely not in this game and we leave the people to judge such conduct."

The popular comedian had taken offense at what he claimed was Malacañang's hand in the the near-axing of his weekly comedy series on ABS-CBN because he was one of Poe's most avid campaigners.

There was no truth to that, the President had said; in fact she was not aware that Dolphy had a show on the station. Ms Macapagal's running mate, Noli de Castro, is married to a former official of the network.

GMA supporters

Defensor agreed that Dolphy could have been jesting, as usual, with the "*tonto*" line, but maintained that the comedian should have known better. "Coming from one who is a respected institution, statements like that affect the people's thinking. We'd rather not react, but many were insulted and angered."

Among these were two congressmen from the ruling party.

Representatives Prospero Nograles of Davao City and Isidoro Real of Zamboanga del Sur, both belonging to the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, branded the "tirade" as "unfair, rude and tragic."

They said it was "out of bounds" for Dolphy to expect Ms Macapagal to know about his television program.

"Dolphy should stick to comedy and not meddle in national issues," Nograles said. "Let's not take him seriously."

Which is exactly how Poe's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino would have it.

"*Pabiro niya sinabi yon* (He was kidding)," Poe said of Dolphy.

The actor had just returned from the campaign sortie in Cebu where the "joke" was delivered. Yesterday he was at the Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, meeting with new supporters who had defected from three parties.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Poe's personal campaign manager, told reporters: "Everybody who wants to deliver a quip in Visayan normally uses that one. *Pero 'ika nga, biro-biruan kung sanglan, totohanan kung tamaan, guilty ang masaktan* (As they say, you're guilty if a joke hits its mark)."

A former comedian himself, the senator said the only "*tonto*" he knew was the sidekick of The Lone Ranger, the Western character.

Loren-Noli election fight gets personal

From page A1

ministration vice presidential candidate Noli de Castro surfaced on Sunday in Tagbilaran City in Bohol—his first wife Pacita Torralba.

And the previous day in Lipa City in Batangas, the brother-in-law of opposition vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda—her husband's twin no less—raised De Castro's hand in front of 2,000 people in a big rally.

Torralba, 59, told reporters she had been campaigning all over the province with essentially one message: "He's not worth it."

The media men had chanced upon Torralba conferring with Legarda backstage during the grand rally of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

"It's my first time to meet her," the senator was quick to say.

Torralba said she and De Castro were wed in a Tagbilaran church in 1974 and broke up after only a year. They have a daughter, Manuelle, now 29 and married to an ABS-CBN employee.

Kicked out

"He replaced a poor Boholana with money," Torralba claimed, referring to De Castro's present spouse, Arlene Sinsuat, of the powerful Muslim clan. Arlene is also a ranking executive at ABS-CBN, the television network that nurtured the broadcast careers of both De Castro and Legarda.

De Castro "kicked me out of the house," Torralba recalled. But she pointed out: "They had to marry in the United States because we were still married then."

Torralba said De Castro had warned her through third parties not to speak against him, or even come out in the open. "He said he would sue me."

In Manila, De Castro last night vehemently denied the accusations, saying these were politically motivated.

"This is the doing of our rivals in politics," he said in an interview with ABS-CBN's TV Patrol, where he presented his daughter.

The marriage was annulled by a civil court shortly before De Castro ran for a Senate seat in 2001, Torralba said, but it has not been annulled by the Church. However, she added, the Church records had disappeared. "He paid someone P10,000 to steal the papers," she alleged.

'Liar, liar'

Never mind their differences as a couple, the spurned woman said, she was campaigning against him because he treated their daughter shabbily.

In one of De Castro's first television interviews after he announced his vice presidential bid, he admitted having a daughter outside of his marriage with Arlene, but said the child was illegitimate.

"He's a big liar," Torralba said. "I don't want him to win. He would go where the money is." In fact, she said, De Castro was not even a college graduate, as he had claimed in his certificate of candidacy.

De Castro said a cousin of Magellan "Patricia" Torralba was serving as a public relations officer of his opponent in Eastern Visayas.

VICE presidential rivals, Loren Legarda and Noli de Castro. JESS YUSON

He said it pained him to disclose that his wife was the one who abandoned him and their daughter and that she married four more times even before their marriage was annulled.

De Castro said it was he who took care of their daughter, sent her to school, looked for a job for his son-in-law and gave the couple a house.

De Castro said Torralba came out when he would not give her P250,000 for a nonexistent project in Tagbilaran.

He claimed that Torralba had sent him a text message warning that she would ruin him.

Asked if she would venture outside Bohol to campaign against De Castro, Torralba said: "Why not? If Loren asks me."

Memory lapse

During the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats proclamation rally in Lipa, Conrad Leviste went on stage and raised De Castro's hand, a gesture applauded by the spectators gathered at the plaza.

In a phone interview, Tony Leviste, former Batangas governor, was fuming, not at his twin brother but at Sen. Ralph Recto.

He told the INQUIRER: "Conrad had a stroke five years ago and now suffers from short-term memory lapse. Sen. Ralph Recto ... took advantage of this, brought him on stage with Noli de Castro and took photos."

Ricky Recto, who is running for Batangas vice governor with the administration party, defended his brother: "Conrad's son, Mark, is running for provincial board member under the Lakas-CMD. It's just natural for a father to support his son's party. The Rectos in Lipa support the candidacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Noli de Castro and Mark Leviste. Whatever family problems the Levistes have, it's none of our business."

Tony Leviste said he talked to Conrad the next morning: "He had no idea what happened."

Conrad Leviste yesterday sent Legarda a handwritten note assuring her of victory, but not really explaining Saturday night's incident. The note said:

"*Huwag kang mabahala sa mga* latest development. *Basta ituloy mo lang ang ginagawa mo* ... It has been said, it shall be done. *Kayo ni FPJ ang mananalo* ... (Don't be concerned with the latest developments. Just carry on. You and FPJ will win."

Foes swamp GMA with all ...

From page A1

on Elections today an electioneering and disqualification complaint against the President for using the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) in her campaign.

The planned suit stemmed from allegations that CHEd Chair Manuel Punzal had ordered the reading of Ms Macapagal's commencement message during college graduation ceremonies.

1 million graduates

The target of the alleged directive is an estimated one million college students graduating in the coming weeks, they said.

Already, the President is facing seven other disqualification cases on charges she had misused public funds to promote her election campaign.

"We ourselves are interested in the speedy disposition of these cases," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

"As to the unlawful use of government resources, we don't have to join a covenant of political parties on a matter we have not engaged in," Bunye added, referring to opposition calls for Ms Macapagal to enter into an agreement not to use state funds for campaigning.

Undaunted, the President pledged at a rally in San Andres Bukid in Manila on Sunday night to provide free education to at least one member of each family holding a Philhealth medical insurance card.

Her goal in her next term is for every card-holding family to have one scholar, she said.

Malacañang aims to give Philhealth cards to up to 5 million families by April 6, the President's birthday, using P3 billion in funds from the PCSO and the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Changing colors

In an eight-page supplemental petition, Anson-Roa and Rasul-Bernardo urged the Supreme Court to stop government ads "which make direct or indirect reference to the President."

They said they had received reports that public funds were being "dissipated at a dizzying pace such that there is a danger that much of the government funds would be ... catastrophically lost if no timely action is taken now."

Government agencies could place ads without referring to Ms Macapagal, they said.

"Presidents may come and go and yet these offices, agencies and corporate bodies would still be there," Anson-Roa and Rasul-Bernardo said.

"There is simply no rhyme or reason in tying them up with the present incumbent. For all we know, they would change colors and tunes just as soon as somebody else resides in Malacañang."

The petitioners earlier asked the tribunal to consider Ms Macapagal as resigned or on official leave to prevent her from misusing government resources.

Campaigning in Victorias City in sugar-rich Negros Occidental, Alyansa's Gatmaytan and Coo said the electioneering and disqualification case they would file against the President would include the officer in charge who signed "the circular or memorandum which mandates all principals and heads of colleges to read [Ms Macapagal's message] during commencement exercises."

Gatmaytan said the message was about the achievements of Ms Macapagal and her father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, "which have no bearing or relation to the commencement exercises."

'Badly written'

Alyansa presidential candidate Raul Roco said the order violated academic freedom.

He said, however, it was fortunate that the commencement message was written badly, thus, "she just loses votes because nobody is listening."

Going on the offensive, Malacañang said opposition vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda herself had distributed some 30,000 Philhealth insurance cards in Bicol.

Secretary Michael Defensor, the President's campaign spokesperson, said Legarda gave half of the P1,200 premium per beneficiary as a counterpart fund to Philhealth. Legarda's share, he said, came from the senator's Countrywide Development Fund or called "pork barrel."

He said the Philhealth cards even bore the photos of the President and Legarda, running mate of opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

"For the past two weeks, they have been filing a slew of cases on the Philhealth cards but, in fact, no less than Sen. Loren Legarda had issued 30,000 Philhealth cards in Bicol," Defensor said.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman also came to the President's defense, saying Ms Macapagal was at a "disadvantage because she's an easy target."

She told a media forum that it was "more difficult" to pass judgment on the opposition candidates because "we don't know yet what will happen" to their promises. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr., Juliet Labog-Javellana and Volt Contreras)*

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March 31 to May 9, 2004

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WHEN Within the 40-day period from March 31 to May 9, 2004
HOW Fill up the registration form below

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we come to you again for the following intentions:

- That every Filipino citizen shall exercise responsibly his right & duty to vote
- To ensure the conduct of honest, orderly and peaceful elections
- To ensure the safety of all polling personnel, teachers, watchers, candidates and their supporters
- To thwart all works of evil, divisiveness, strife, discord, greed and deception
- That the result of the elections be accepted peacefully by the people
- That the elected leaders embrace public service that is God-fearing and selfless
- That reconciliation, healing and unity come upon the people
- That the Will of God prevail and righteousness reign in the land.

Lord, hear our prayer!

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	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israel premier inches closer to resignation

JERUSALEM—Israel's Supreme Court on Monday ordered Ariel Sharon's son to hand over potentially incriminating tapes and documents in two corruption investigations, including one that targets the prime minister.

The court ruling was seen as another step toward Sharon's possible resignation. Israel's Vice Premier Ehud Olmert said Monday that despite growing legal troubles, Sharon is determined to go ahead with a proposed withdrawal from much of the Gaza Strip.

On Sunday, Israel's chief prosecutor recommended that the prime minister and his son Gilad be indicted in the so-called "Greek Island Affair," in which a real estate developer allegedly paid them hundreds of thousands of dollars in exchange for help in promoting a tourism project.

However, the final decision on whether to indict Ariel Sharon for bribe-taking is up to Israel's attorney general who is expected to rule within a month.

Gilad Sharon has not cooperated with police, refusing to answer questions or hand over tapes and documents seen as crucial in the investigation.

On Monday, the Supreme Court ended an eight-month legal battle and ordered Gilad Sharon to comply with a lower ruling that he hand over the material.

Gilad Sharon's lawyer, Micha Fettman, said his client would comply, but suggested it might take time to obtain the documents. He said Gilad Sharon would have to get the documents requested by the court from third parties.

At issue in the "Greek Island Affair" is an attempt by real estate developer David Appel to promote a tourism project on a Greek island in 1999, at a time when Sharon was foreign minister. Appel hired Gilad Sharon as an adviser and allegedly paid him hundreds of thousands of dollars.

At the time, investigators were wiretapping Appel, the Haaretz daily said Monday. According to one tape, Appel told the elder Sharon in one conversation that "your son is going to earn a lot of money," the Haaretz daily reported Monday.

At a later point in the conversation, Sharon said: "The island is in our hands."

Haaretz said Sharon's statement was one of the pieces of evidence that persuaded state attorney Edna Arbel to recommend an indictment.

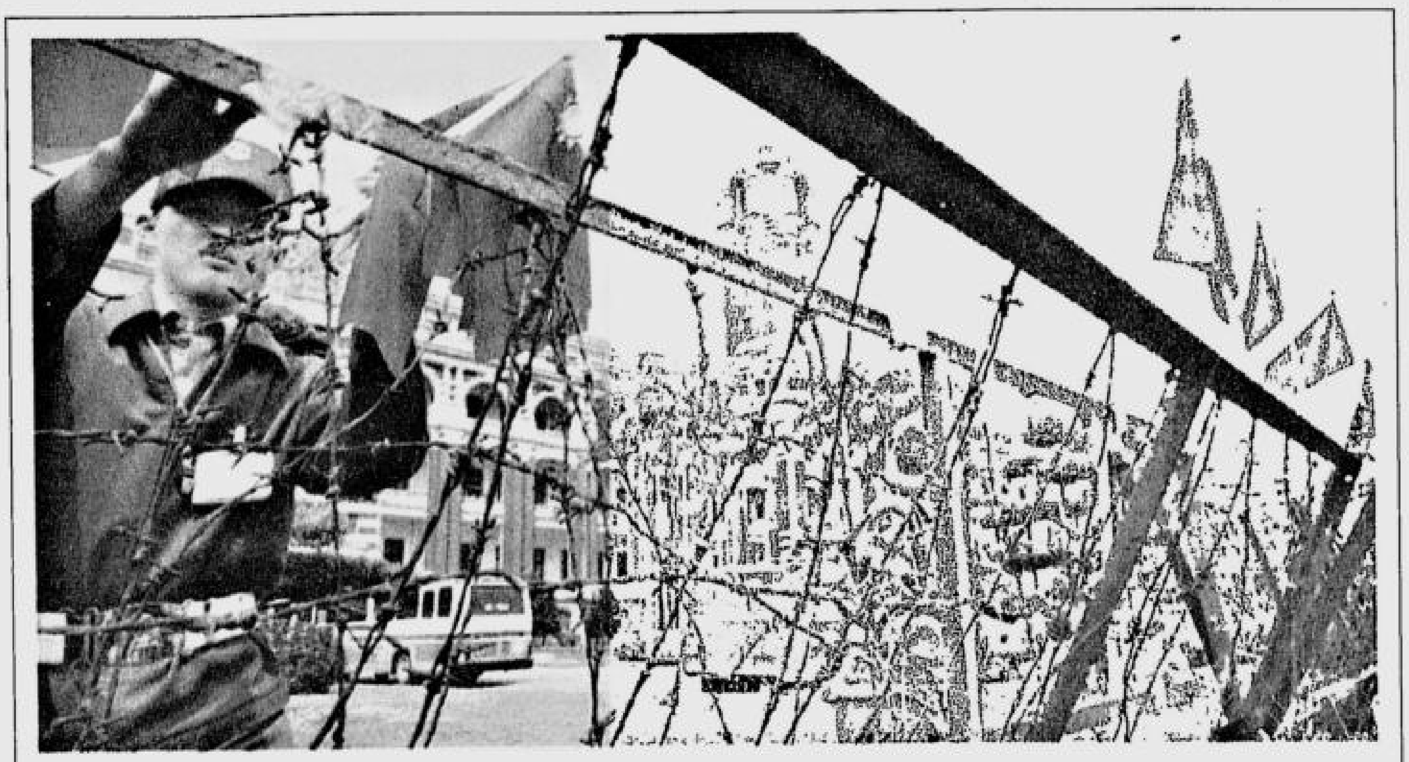
Miriam Rosenthal, a former senior official in the prosecutor's office, said she considered Sharon's response incriminating. "If you take the connotation of the remarks 'the island is in our hands,' this is almost equivalent to a confession," Rosenthal told Israel Army Radio. "Something here doesn't look good."

However, the attorney general, Meni Mazuz, considers the case "problematic" because of the lack of conclusive evidence that Sharon accepted a bribe, the Yediot Ahronot newspaper reported Monday. Mazuz plans to consult with other jurists before making a final decision, media reports said.

Opposition lawmakers have called on Sharon to resign in the light of the state attorney's recommendation. Infrastructure Minister Josef Paritzky said Sunday that Sharon must resign if an indictment was issued, or his Shinui Party would withdraw from the coalition.

In a second corruption case, police are investigating a $1.5-million loan from a South African businessman to Sharon's two sons, Gilad and Omri, used to cover illegal contributions to his 1999 election campaign.

The developments in the case come as Sharon is formulating a plan to withdraw from much of Gaza and a few West Bank settlements. Analysts have said that, in light of the suspicions, Sharon may speed up the implementation of the plan since it is widely supported by the public. *AP*



TENSIONS IN TAIWAN EASE

A soldier removes Taiwanese flags put up by the opposition around the Presidential Office in Taipei, which has been rocked by protests since March 20 following the narrow election victory of President Chen Shui-bian. Opposition candidate Lien Chan of the Nationalist Party is demanding a recount. Both sides have agreed to set up a special task force to investigate the mysterious election-eve shooting of the president and work out the mechanics of the recount. AFP

Mobuto loyalists launch coup attempt in Congo

KINSHASA, Congo—Government forces put down an apparent coup attempt in the Congolese capital, battling attackers believed loyal to former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in the most serious political strife to hit the city since the end of Congo's five-year war.

The government refused to characterize Sunday's deadly clashes as an attempted putsch. But Interior Minister Theophile Mbemba said the attack would not destabilize President Joseph Kabila's government—a national-unity administration struggling to reassert control over its vast, rebellion-splintered territory following the 1998-2003 war.

"We have the situation under control," government spokesperson Vital Kamerhe said.

Fighters loyal to Mobutu, Congo's late Cold War dictator, were among those who launched Sunday's "coup attempt," British Ambassador Jim Atkinson said.

Mobutu was overthrown in 1997 by then-ruler Laurent Kabila, Joseph Kabila's father. As Laurent Kabila's insurgents entered Kinshasa, thousands of Mobutu loyalists scattered, and many now live in surrounding countries.

The attacks began before dawn Sunday and lasted through four hours of gunfire that kept most Kinshasa inhabitants indoors. Hundreds of Congolese took to the streets to cheer government troops when the shooting eased in early afternoon as the government apparently overcame the attacks.

The president was believed in the country on Sunday but his whereabouts were not known. "I have it on good authority that he's safe," Atkinson said.

Congolese officials said the simultaneous attacks targeted an Army camp near Kabila's offices, a military airport, a naval shipyard on the Congo river and the national radio and television headquarters.

Congolese forces apprehended 12 assailants, Kamerhe said, adding that untold numbers of the civilian-clothed attackers disappeared into the city with their weapons. He said the battle killed one soldier and wounded two others.

One injured assailant fled into a UN building in Kinshasa, but was later turned over to Congolese authorities, said Hamadoun Toure, a UN spokesperson.

The assault represents the first major threat to the power-sharing government meant to reunify and stabilize Congo after the devastating five-year civil war in which an estimated 3 million people died, mainly through war-induced hunger and disease.

Kinshasa was spared the worst of the fighting in the war and Sunday's attacks represent the most serious political violence to hit the city yet since rebels traveled from their bush headquarters to the capital to join Kabila's government last year. *AP*

4As POSITION PAPER
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Ireland bans smoking in all restaurants, pubs

DUBLIN—Ireland became the first country in the world to outlaw cigarettes in all its restaurants and pubs on Monday, to the delight of non-smokers but the dismay of some publicans who say they will have to police the ban.

From midnight on Sunday it became illegal to smoke in virtually all workplaces, closed public spaces and on public transport, with fines of up to 3,000 euros ($3,825) for transgressors.

While similar bans have been imposed in cities and states elsewhere in the world, including in California and New York, Ireland is the first country to impose such a ban nationally.

"I am confident that this measure will provide a health legacy, not just for current but also for future generations who thankfully will never know what it was like to work in an enclosed smoke-filled environment," Prime Minister Bertie Ahern said as the ban started.

Opinion polls have consistently shown that most people in Ireland support the move, and the government says that even 40 percent of the country's smokers are behind it.

Some smokers have had March 29 penciled in their diaries for months as the day they will give up a habit which costs some 7,000 lives in Ireland each year.

But others say the ban is ill-conceived and unenforceable.

The Vintners' Federation of Ireland (VFI), which represents some 6,000 publicans across the country, says it is unfair to expect its members to police the ban.

Pub owners will have to confront defiant smokers who, perhaps emboldened by drink, refuse to heed the "no smoking" signs plastered across the walls of their pubs, they say.

Other critics say the ban is another example of the state meddling in the private affairs of its citizens.

The Leitrim Lou

JOE Stanley and Andrew Clancy stub out their last cigarettes at the Leitrim Lounge in Wicklow Town, Ireland, as the smoking ban takes effect. AP

One woman e-mailed national broadcaster RTE on Monday morning to say she was wearing black to mark "the first day of dictatorship in Ireland."

"For me personally, it's a bridge too far," smoker Shay Mahoney said as the ban came into force. *Reuters*

New York bars unhurt by ban

NEW YORK—Tax receipts from bars and restaurants jumped almost 9 percent in the 10 months since the city's public smoking ban went into effect, proof the city says that businesses haven't been harmed by the rules.

"The city's bar and restaurant industry is thriving and its workers are breathing cleaner, safer air," said a report issued Monday by the Economic Development Corp. and the Departments of Finance, Health and Mental Hygiene and Small Business Services.

From April 2003 through January 2004, the city collected about $17.4 million in tax receipts from bars and restaurants, compared with $16 million in the same period the year before—a 8.7 percent jump.

Some opponents of the ban say their establishments are suffering as a result of the no-smoking law, but the city said indications for the industry were generally strong.

The report found that the number of workers employed in bars and restaurants were the highest number in at least a decade, that active liquor licenses were up and that the number of bars and restaurants remained unchanged. *AP*

Spreading ocean 'dead zones' No. 1 environment threat

JEJU, South Korea—So-called "dead zones," oxygen-starved areas of the world's oceans that are devoid of fish, top the list of emerging environmental challenges, the United Nations Environment Program (Unep) warned Monday in its global overview.

The spreading zones have doubled over the last decade and pose as big a threat to fish stocks as overfishing, Unep said in its Global Environment Outlook Year Book 2003, released at the opening of the agency's 8th summit for the world's environment ministers.

The new findings tally nearly 150 dead zones around the globe, double the number in 1990, with some stretching 70,000 sq km, about the size of Ireland.

Dead zones have long afflicted the Gulf of Mexico and Chesapeake Bay, but are now spreading to other bodies of water, such as the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Adriatic Sea, Gulf of Thailand and Yellow Sea, as other regions develop, Unep said.

They are also appearing off South America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

The main cause is excess nitrogen run-off from farm fertilizers, sewage and industrial pollutants. The nitrogen triggers blooms of microscopic algae known as phytoplankton. As the algae die and rot, they consume oxygen, thereby suffocating everything from clams and lobsters to oysters and fish.

"Human kind is engaged in a gigantic, global, experiment as a result of inefficient and often overuse of fertilizers, the discharge of untreated sewage and the ever rising emissions from vehicles and factories," Unep Executive Director Klaus Toepfer said in a statement. "Unless urgent action is taken to tackle the sources of the problem, it is likely to escalate rapidly."

Dead zones are especially dangerous to fisheries because they afflict coastal waters where many fish spawn and spend most of their lives before moving to deeper water, said Unep senior environmental affairs officer Marion Cheatle.

"It hasn't been something well known by policy makers," Marion said. "But it's been getting noticeably worse."

Unep urged nations to cooperate in reducing the amount of nitrogen discharged into their coastal waters, in part by cutting back on fertilizer use or planting more forests and grasslands along feeder rivers to soak up the excess nitrogen.

The announcement comes as environment ministers from more than 150 nations gathered on the South Korean resort island of Jeju at Unep's 8th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. *AP*

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WORLDBRIEFS

Left holds victory march in France

PARIS—In its most impressive electoral showing in a generation, France's left bulldozed its way across France in regional elections with a crushing defeat of President Jacques Chirac's government that sets the stage for a Cabinet shake-up. Sunday's victory march by the reborn opposition Socialists and their leftist allies isolated the conservative president with a losing team and an unpopular party midway through his five-year term. The results jolted the political landscape to its core and amounted to an angry call to the French leadership to change course. Painful reforms instituted to save the social security system from bankruptcy and bring France's budget deficit in line with European Union rules have turned wide swaths of French society against Chirac's governing conservatives. *AP*

4 insurgents killed in Mosul

BAGHDAD—US soldiers in the northern city of Mosul shot and killed four rebels suspected of involvement in attacks in the region, the military said Monday. Two American soldiers were wounded in the firefight. The fighting came hours after gunmen fired on a convoy carrying a government minister near Mosul and the separate killings of a Canadian and Briton in the area. *AP*

Egypt wants to convene Arab summit

CAIRO—Egypt wants an Arab summit to be held within three weeks, and believes Tunisia's cancelation of the summit that was to have started Monday was utterly unwarranted, President Hosni Mubarak has said. "There is no justification for delaying the summit, and for one party imposing its views unilaterally without consulting others," Mubarak told Orbit television in an interview that was published Monday in the Egyptian press. *AP*

French rock star gets 8 years

VILNIUS, Lithuania—French rock star Bertrand Cantat was convicted of manslaughter in the beating death of his movie-star girlfriend and was sentenced to eight years in prison in a case that has horrified many French. Cantat's lawyer said they would appeal the verdict and sentence. As the verdict was read, Cantat looked downward and said nothing. The 40-year-old lead singer of one of France's most popular bands, Noir Desir (Black Desire), was charged with manslaughter for killing 41-year-old French actress Marie Trintignant in a hotel room in Lithuania's capital last July. *AP*

Debate on method of execution

WASHINGTON—Convicted triple-murderer David Larry Nelson told a jury he wanted to be sent to Alabama's electric chair. But when his date with the executioner came, the chair was no longer in use and Nelson objected to lethal injection. Nelson claimed his collapsed veins would make the punishment unconstitutionally cruel unless special precautions were taken. The Supreme Court takes up his case Monday to decide a technical question of whether last-minute appeals from death row inmates should be allowed in federal courts. *AP*

Saakashvili backers lead in Georgia

TBILISI, Georgia—Backers of President Mikhail Saakashvili were headed Monday for domination of the Georgian parliament, an exit poll showed after balloting marred by allegations of intimidation in a province whose leader is a vehement foe of the president. According to the exit poll conducted by several non governmental organizations, Saakashvili's National Movement-Democrat party won 78.6 percent of the vote and was the only party to surpass the 7-percent barrier necessary to enter the legislature. *AP*

Three get death in Burma

BANGKOK—Three people in military-ruled Burma (Myanmar) have been convicted of high treason and sentenced to death for having contacts with the UN's International Labor Organization, according to the ILO.

Representatives of the ILO met with the three men and "consider that they have been condemned on unsound grounds and thus should be released," said a statement from the UN organization on Monday. *AP*

Tanong ng Bayan
INQ TV
Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi
Family planning: Mali ba ang Simbahan?
Ngayong gabi, sa isang special edition ng InqTV, tatalakayin natin ang isa sa pinakamainit na isyu sa 2004 elections, kasama sina Fr. James Reuter, SJ; Roberto de Ocampo ng AIM; Mila Aguilar ng Bangon Pilipinas; Ana Maria Tabunda ng Pulse Asia; Roberto Ador ng PLCPD; Atty. Jo Imbong ng CBCP; at Rina Jimenez David ng Inquirer.
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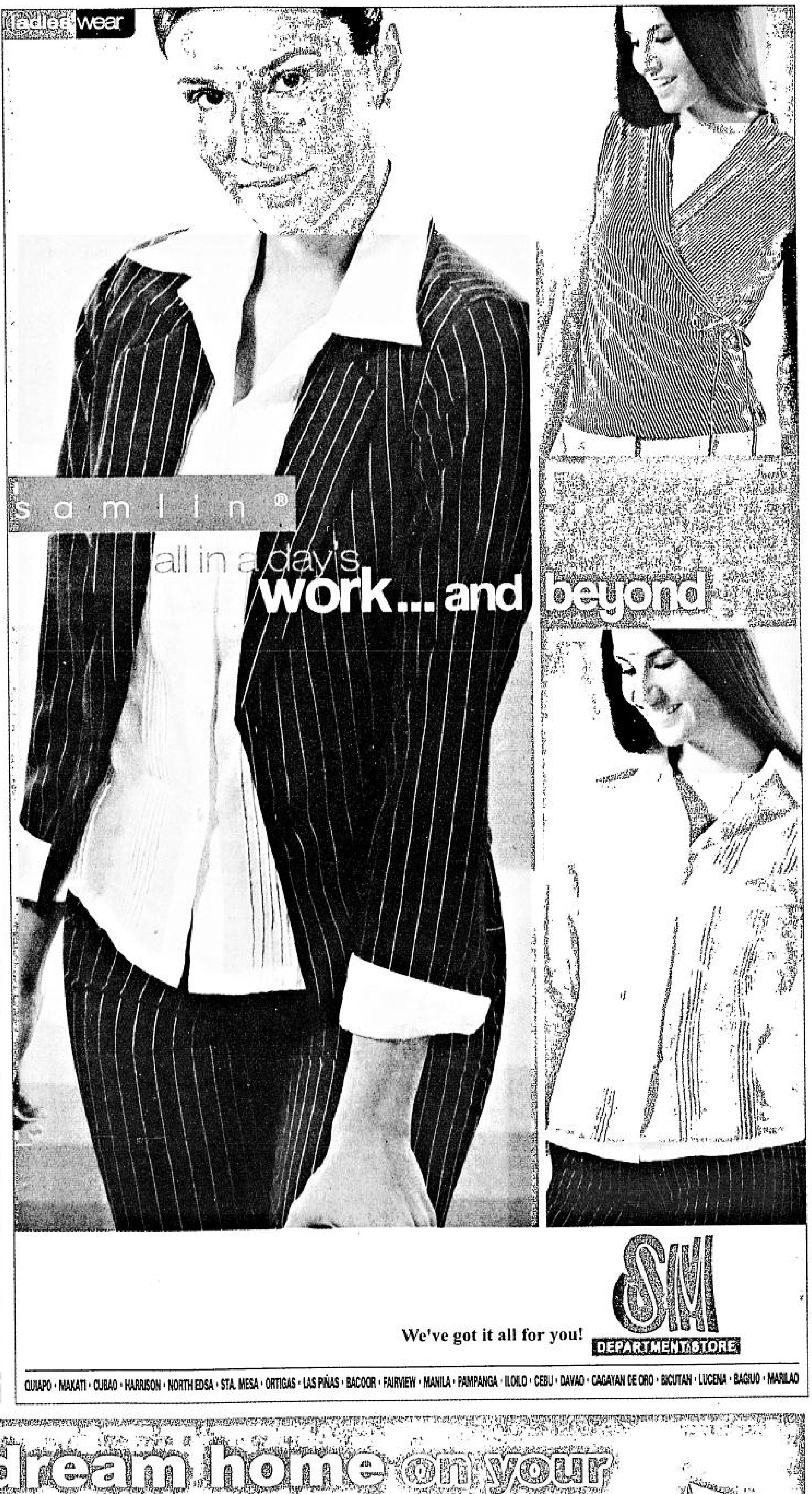
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Participatory governance

EDITORIAL

LAST week an event took place which, given the many big political happenings that are occurring nowadays, would normally not make a dent on the nation's political consciousness. But the book that was launched at that event could point the way to good governance not only at the local but also the national level.

The book is "Celebrating Participatory Governance in Nueva Vizcaya" by Dr. Pilar Ramos-Jimenez of the De La Salle University. It tells about a successful experiment of the Nueva Vizcaya provincial government in political and social engineering. It tells about how government can be made more relevant to the lives of the people when they are asked to participate in its decisions.

Three examples should suffice to show how effective participatory governance has been in Nueva Vizcaya:

First, the revival of the Nueva Vizcaya watershed. The usual solution would be to eject squatters or illegal settlers from a watershed. But in Nueva Vizcaya, the provincial government changed its goal from the ejectment of squatters to providing them with legal tenurial and economic incentives that motivate them to undertake long-term forest management practices.

Nueva Vizcaya developed a strong sense of community ownership of the watershed management program. With land security as an incentive, communities have assumed the role of "social fence" to protect the watershed.

Now, everything is all right: the settlers are happy, the provincial government is happy because it solved two problems without much conflict, and the rest of the people of the province are happy because they are assured that the destruction of the forest will stop and they will have a watershed that will supply them with water and prevent floods in the lowlands.

Second, the streamlining of the real property tax system. The real property tax administration was improved by increasing the tax collection targets and expanding the tax base. The program was marketed as a social product. The result was that the real property cost-to-collection ratio improved from P1.49 to P1 in 1991-1996 to P.87 to P1 in 2001. Real property tax collection increased by 46 percent. And the tax delinquency rate dropped from 32 percent to 12 percent.

Third, the "metamorphosis" of the provincial jail from a virtual pigsty and snake pit to a model of custodianship that preserves the dignity and well-being of wards through humane and just systems and programs. The holistic approach included values orientation; a health, nutrition and environmental sanitation program; infrastructure maintenance; an income-generating program; sports and recreation; and support for educational and religious activities.

Other areas of change were: empowering persons with disability, enhancing the quality of the health service program and improving the funds management and information system.

What were the lessons learned from the experiment?

First, get the people involved in governance. The people know what's good for them, and they will always participate and collaborate in programs that will redound to their own good.

Second, communication or "social marketing" is important. At first there may be some resistance to a program, but after people are fully informed and their participation is obtained, they will support the experiment.

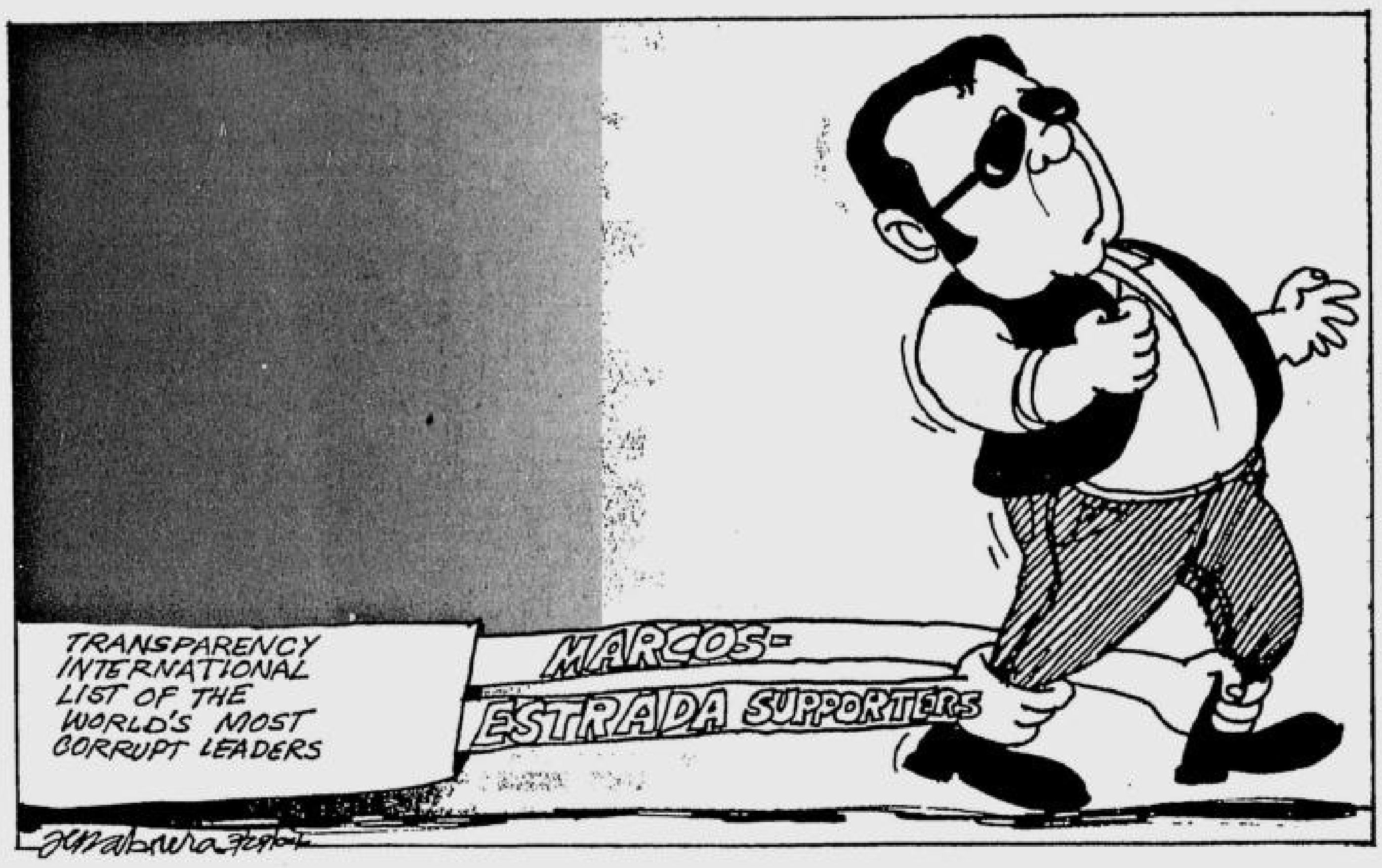
Third, a vision is a vital element in the process of change. The vision of an organization or a political unit has to be clearly stated so that it can always guide in all efforts to attain its goals.

Fourth, values orientation is needed if we are to change the thinking, the attitudes of people as well as their way of doing things.

Fifth, the leadership must have the political will to carry out the necessary changes. A leader should be competent, intelligent, moral, determined and principled.

One major factor for the success of the Nueva Vizcaya experiment may be the fact that its governor, former Judge Rodolfo Agbayani, is a strong-willed, progressive and forward-looking administrator. His efforts have paid off, and Nueva Vizcaya has won many awards, including its installation in the Gawad Pook Hall of Fame and the Hall of Fame of the Department of Interior and Local Government and an award of excellence from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the DILG Foundation.

Dr. Ramos-Jimenez's book should be required reading for all government officials, politicians, candidates and for all the people who would like to see change take place in our benighted country. If the experiment in participatory governance could be replicated in other provinces, and probably, later, in the entire nation, something may yet be done to undo the mess that government officials and traditional politicians have made of our country.


TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL LIST OF THE WORLD'S MOST CORRUPT LEADERS
MARCOS-
ESTRADA SUPPORTERS
jcabrera 3-29-04

The 'Dean's List'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"C'MON guys, let's try for three." A retired Filipino journalist in Australia e-mailed, after Associated Press reported that former presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada were included in Transparency International's list of "Ten Most Corrupt World Leaders."

Tongue-in-cheek, he added: "We've got what it takes."

Marcos' $5 billion to $10 billion fortune came in second, trailing Indonesia's Suharto with $15 billion to $35 billion. Zairean dictator Mobutu Sese Seko was third with $5 billion.

In Slot 10 was Estrada. His $78 to $80 million lagged behind Nicaragua's Arnoldo Aleman's $100 million.

"Abuse of political power for private gain deprives the most needy [and] creates a level of despair that breeds conflict," Transparency chair Peter Eigen told AP.

In Jakarta, Suharto's lawyer flayed Transparency for "discrediting" Siti Hardiyanti. Suharto's eldest daughter is running for parliament. (Brother Tommy is in jail for corruption.)

In Cebu, opposition's Fernando Poe defended his guru. "The report is wrong," he protested. "The trial [for plunder] isn't over yet."

Indeed, only courts, in a democratic system, establish guilt. But FPJ forgot an inconvenient detail: Erap doesn't recognize the courts.

He has refused to present evidence before the Sandiganbayan. Instead, Erap circulates a defense video. He switched film for documents. The streets, not court rooms, are his preferred venue.

"Estrada and his lawyers...project every defeat of his motions as an act of injustice," observes constitutionalist Joaquin Bernas, SJ. "The judicial process is projected as pure luck..."

"The fabric of government is weak enough," Father Bernas notes. "Another surrender to pressure will only weaken it some more... The challenge of Joseph Estrada is basically to the capacity of the government to enforce the law."

FPJ is discovering what Estrada's defenders know: the greatest threat to Erap can be Erap.

In a 1992 ANC interview, the detained president cheerfully admitted he signed as "Jose Velarde"—but only as a loan guarantor. Probers vainly sought this shadowy figure after his P142-million check to purchase the "Boracay Mansion" surfaced at the blue ribbon *jueteng* investigation.

A "Jose Velarde" bank account started off with one peso. It exploded to almost P3.3 billion. A check, deposited on Nov. 8, 1999, amounted to P189.7 million.

The sums exceeded usual *jueteng* skim-offs, then Rep. Joker Arroyo agreed on a TV interview. From crack then? he was asked. Or Golden Triangle heroin? The careful prosecutor demurred. No hard evidence.

But the idea of drugs scrubbed "clean" by those with access to high officials, a la Medellin cartel, unnerves. Anyway, crony Jaime Dichavez claimed the account—before he scrammed, sans forwarding address.

Recall of Atong Ang, Mark Jimenez, "Jingle Bells," Dante Tan, Yolanda Ricaforte, Butch Tenorio & Co. is now blurred. A people of truncated memories barely remember that, at his Luneta inaugural, Estrada thundered: "Now power is with the people." But power slipped instead to Palace carousers and the presidential harem.

International Herald Tribune's Thomas Fuller wrote (Nov. 14, 2000) of a secret April 1999 Malacañang advisers meeting. They asked a "capable politically astute" presidential *kabit* to whisper, in the boudoir, a message: high-stakes gambling, midnight Palace boozing and misrule invited impeachment.

"Delivered that night, (the message) was prescient," Fuller writes. Erap became the first president impeached. His was "an administration that, from its first days in office, was hampered by quirks of a president who bumped from one scandal to another."

This now-hazy background forms context for Transparency's "Dean's List." Filipino scholars had earlier bracketed together Marcos and Estrada.

"Marcos tested limits of political oppression and our capacity to endure it," Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture's Perla Maggay and Evelyn Feliciano wrote. "Estrada tests the limits of moral corruption and our capacity to get roused to indignation."

"No society can survive without a minimum of moral sense," they added. "Moral weakness led to a general sense of contamination, engulfing us as a nation, and corroding our sense of right and wrong....

"Our Asian traditions [insist] on sageliness within and kingliness without" (A forerunner of today's squabble on heart over brains?). A presidency that has lost its moorings sends the entire state adrift in a morass where ethical boundaries are always shifting."

Corruption extorts its cost. Marcos beggared a whole nation in a generation, Ateneo's book "Impoverishment During the Marcos Regime" asserts. "There were an estimated 3.3 million more Filipinos in 2000 than there were in 1997," UN's Philippine Human Development Report 2002 states. That was Erap's watch.

"Two extremes of our bankrupt system are Marcos the peak and Estrada the pit," economist Sixto K. Roxas writes in his book on our "failed political system" that, in 54 years, reeled from 15 economic booms and busts.

If we don't come to our senses, Roxas warns, "then we deserve to dance, like Count Albrecht, to our death, unless we find some Giselle, to sustain us, through the ringing of church bells to our salvation."

* * *

(E-mail : juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Bad ad

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'VE been meaning to write about it for some time now, but it keeps getting waylaid by one thing and another. These are political times given to political thoughts. But I can't let it pass without comment.

It is the Napoleon Brandy ad that says, *"Nakatikim ka na ba ng kinse anyos?"* ("Have you tasted a 15-year-old?) I do not particularly mind that I share the company of the moralists on this, the ones who raised a hue and cry over "Live Show" some years ago. They're the ones who're leading the pack here, as usual. But I mind the ad even more than them. It is offensive.

I have as wide a latitude or tolerance for what the moralists call "immoral" as any liberal in this country. I have no problems with women—or men—disrobing, particularly in movies, such as "Live Show" that tell the truth about the human condition in inhuman circumstances. I have no problems with women—or men—looking sexy in skimpy clothes in ads, though I would agree to limit the more exhibitionist ones to media that are not easily accessible to kids. But I wouldn't exert myself strenuously there, if only because kids can easily access plain pornography in the Internet. And don't think you can stop them by setting up all sorts of parental controls. They know cyberspace better than you do, it's their world. Better just guide them in life rather than keep trying to protect them.

I have no problems with kinky and suggestive ads, particularly those that refer to sex. I have no problems with ads that advert to the infinite pleasures of sex or to female or male assets. Not quite incidentally, I just saw one a couple of days ago, near SM North, a movie entitled "Masikip sa Dibdib," starring Ruffa Mae Quinto. The phrase itself idiomatically means "hard to take," or hard to accept, but it literally means "tightness in the chest." The ad leaves little doubt about what it means by showing Quinto's ample frontal assets.

I remember as well Greg Macabenta telling me he had a copy in the '60s that never got aired in public. It was an ad for a brand of king-size cigarettes—as opposed to the short ones in flip-top boxes—and the copy he had in mind was, *"Pahabaan tayo."* Literally, "let's compare lengths," but the Tagalog of course unmistakably suggests which lengths are being compared. The censors shot it down. But I personally wouldn't have had problems with it either.

But I do have problems with a copy that says, *"Nakatikim ka na ba ng kinse anyos?"* I understand that the officials of Destileria Limtuaco have been going around telling reporters the ad clearly refers to the drink because that is all it shows, nothing else. But that doesn't hold water. The power of ads precisely are their subliminal message, and the subliminal message of that ad is inescapable. It is all of a piece with references to tasting a *donsella* or virgin. It has no place even in drunken banter, though it does take place there, particularly the kind where drunks take exception to apparent slights and knife themselves to death. That is to say, the macho kind. The sensitivities there are of another order entirely. But if that has no place even in drunken sprees, it has no place in sober venues.

I have no problems with ads that suggest sex, I have a problem with ads that suggest exploitation. This one is exploitative in the extreme. It does make a reference to women, or juveniles, which 15-year-olds are. And not just subliminally, the suggestion is fairly forthright. That is an invitation to mayhem. I personally have never worried about "boldness," or references to the sex act, inducing rape. But I do worry open endorsements of macho behavior or mentality inducing rape. There is nothing witty or funny or humorous about "tasting a 15-year old." It has a nasty ring to it, implying seduction, transaction, appropriation.

I've always maintained in opposition to the moralists that the thing to worry about is not the baring of skin but the baring of bad values. The truly offensive ads I've found are not those that show women in various levels of dishabille but the ads that encourage women to bleach their skin (suggesting dark skin is unsightly), to drink or eat stuff to make kids grow taller (suggesting the average Filipino height is ugly), to undergo all sorts of facial treatment, including surgery, in particular to sharpen noses (suggesting a snub nose is an affront to beauty). The *"tikim ng kinse anyos"* is all of a piece with these ones, not with the ones that display naked skin. That is what makes it objectionable.

But I do not share Alfredo Lim's passion for ignoring or skirting the law and doing all sorts of vigilante stuff. A candidate in the May elections, he just tried to score points by tearing off the "kinse anyos" from a couple of billboards in Manila last week. That is dimwitted. The only way to fight an atrocity like this is to be superior to it, to rise above it, to show you have a better quality of mind than the one that produced it. It is not to show that you can be just as vicious as the thing you mean to end. Lynching a thief does not reflect on the thief, it reflects on the mob. Tearing down billboards offensive to one's taste does not reflect on the billboards, it reflects on oneself.

It is also completely dangerous in that it opens the floodgates to censorship. I've never been comfortable with Lim's concept of what is offensive in life. We allow him to bully his way through this only at our peril. By all means let's get rid of the ad, but let's do it legally, morally, by public outrage. Or what hurts the most, which is a call for a boycott of the product. You can always answer an ad that says *"Nakatikim ka na ba ng kinse anyos"* by saying:

"Nakatikim ka na ba ng lugi?"

FPJ should go beyond mumbling

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

KNP media handler Rod Reyes was quoted as saying that FPJ needs all the support he can get in relation to the elections, so he could put flesh to his campaign battle cry to "win back our people's trust and confidence in the government." The problem is that it's hard for FPJ to win the thinking people's confidence if all he does is mumble incoherent lines in the campaign. They need to hear him articulate his program and platform, never mind if these are written for him by someone else. What he needs is to show the electorate he understands what's being presented to him, and he won't just be any clique's puppet this he can do by explaining his program himself, preferably in a public forum such as a debate.

* * *

If the national elections are heating up, so are the local ones. From Antique, lone district Rep. Exequiel B. Javier wrote to dispute the claim of Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar Perez that the Liberal Party under the leadership of Senate President Franklin Drilon will carry President Macapagal-Arroyo to victory in Western Visayas. Javier asserted that it will be Lakas-CMD "under the leadership of GMA, FVR and JDV" that will do this for GMA in the region. He stressed that Governor Perez's boast is "empty" inasmuch as of Antique's 18 mayors, she has only five allies: two from the LP, two from the NPC and one from LDP; whereas the 13 other mayors are "against her" (11 from Lakas, one each from Kampi and Aksyon). In fact, says Javier, Perez was unsuccessful in her various attempts to win a seat in Congress as LDP, while her brother, former Gov. Enrique Zaldivar, lost twice in his bid for governor. "She won in 2001 simply because Lakas CMD carried her to victory," he claimed, adding that Perez is "not really an LP but a dyed-in-the-wool LDP in LP clothing" and that she turned LP "conveniently" in the hope of coalescing with Lakas.

Perez and Javier, dynamic regional leaders both, have been friends of mine from way back and I hope they can strike a peaceful coexistence in Antique, so that they could move it out of poverty.

* * *

In Palawan the other week, reelectionist 2nd district Rep. Abraham Mitra protested to this columnist the travel advisory issued by the Israeli Embassy against journeying to Palawan. He decried it as a "roadblock" that comes at a time when Palawan has already regained tourist confidence after the Dos Palmas kidnapping in 2000. Mitra asserted that the Western Command is very much prepared to combat any new attempts by lawless elements there, while the resorts have beefed up their security and bought radar equipment to detect approaching unfamiliar vessels. Mitra asserted that Palawan's peace and order situation has been very stable since that unfortunate episode years back, and tourists have returned, confident that they would be safe there. He expressed the hope that the Israeli embassy officials would see the real situation there for themselves.

That travel advisory against Palawan is quite out of sync, since it's Israel that has a big security problem at this time, after the spiritual founder of Hamas was killed there. I saw for myself how the foreign and domestic tourists have returned to Palawan, and one indication is the brisk business in artifacts and art objects and trinkets. The tourist council of Palawan ought to invite the Israeli Embassy officials to go down there and enjoy its resorts.

* * *

As we wind up this month, which marked International Women's Day on March 8, it's timely to use some passages from Pope John Paul II's letter to women written from the Vatican last June 29, 1995, courtesy of a friend of mine, Pinky de Jesus of Quezon City. In that letter JPII disclosed his thoughts on what it means to be a woman in our time, stressing the dignity and rights of women as seen in the light of the word of God. Thanking women who are mothers, the Pontiff said they have "sheltered human beings within yourselves in a unique experience of joy and travail. This experience makes you become God's own smile upon the newborn child, the one who guides your child's first steps, who helps it to grow, and who is the anchor as the child makes its way along the journey of life."

The Pope also thanked women "who are wives" by saying, "You irrevocably join your future to that of your husbands, in a relationship of mutual giving, at the service of love and life." To women who work, he stressed that "You are present and active in every area of life—social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture which unites reason and feeling, to a model of life ever open to the sense of 'mystery,' to the establishment of economic and political structures ever more worthy of humanity."

* * *

Citing also women who are daughters and sisters and the "consecrated women," the Pontiff then thanks "every woman for the 'simple fact of being a woman.'" He argues that "through the insight which is so much a part of your womanhood, you enrich the world's understanding and help to make human relations more honest and authentic." John Paul II asserts that in all its expressions, womanhood is "part of the essential heritage of mankind and of the Church herself." Finally he toasts "every woman for all that constitutes the eternal measure of her feminine dignity, for the 'great works of God' which throughout human history have been accomplished in and through her."

* * *

Fr. Renato Jose Lopez, a biblical scholar trained in Rome's Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he obtained a licentiate in sacred scripture, will give two recollections on "The Eucharist" this Holy Thursday and Good Friday, April 8 & 9, 2004. They will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, at the St. Mark's & St. Matthew room, Lay Formation Center, Christ the King Parish, Green Meadows, Q.C. Interested parties are asked to bring their bibles. For more details, call Arlina Onglao at 929-0144 or 0917-8148127.

A 'fatwah' on family planning

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ANNOUNCED the other week was a *fatwah* or "official ruling" of the Assembly of Darul-Iftah of the Philippines," or the organization of Islamic religious authorities or imams in the country, on the issue of reproductive health and family planning.

More than once, I've heard from Filipino Muslims—many of them considered authorities on the teaching of the Koran—say that Islam "forbids" the practice of family planning. In much the same way do Catholic bishops and priests invoke scripture when they say that contraception is a "sin."

Perhaps to settle the matter once and for all, imams from all over the Philippines were convened late last year to discuss exactly what their faith teaches with regard to planning one's family and looking after one's reproductive well-being. The result of their discussions was the *fatwah*, released to the public last March 10 in Davao.

In this document, the 22 Muslim religious leaders who signed it affirmed that "improved reproductive health conditions of the Muslim people benefits individual Muslims and strengthens the Muslim nation socially, economically, politically and in all other aspects of human life."

A family planning program for the Muslim community in the Philippines, they said, "should be anchored on the principles of non-coercion, responsible parenthood and informed choice." They also made clear that family planning "does not refer to abortion, neither to birth control," stressing that it refers to birth or child spacing and "should be the couple's decision."

The *fatwah* states that "all methods of contraception are allowed as long as they are safe, legal, in accordance with the Islamic Shariah, and approved by a credible physician preferably a Muslim for the benefit of both the mother and the child."

* * *

NOTE that the imams make no distinction among the safe and legal means of family planning that are available here, eschewing the stale debate between "natural" and "artificial" methods of contraception. Instead, they keep their focus on "the welfare of the mother and child" so that "the couple (could) raise *saleh* **(goodly) children who are pious, healthy, educated, useful and well-behaved citizens."**

What makes the *fatwah* all the more remarkable is that the authors based it on the objective—and truly alarming—health conditions of the Muslim faithful in this country. In fact, the document starts by citing the awful toll in lives of women lost to pregnancy and childbirth—a shocking number of 10 women dying every day. It also cites that the maternal mortality rates are highest in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Northern Mindanao at 200-300 maternal deaths per 100,000 births.

And it isn't only women who're dying. The infant mortality rate in ARMM, the document says, is "also very high at 55 deaths per 1,000 live births compared to the national rate of 35 deaths per 1,000 live births."

The *fatwah* is thus based on real concern for the welfare of their "flock," something that Catholic authorities also say they share, although if they would only take time to observe and listen to the needs of the poor, they would see family planning as a real health need and a means by which poor couples could find some control over their lives.

My congratulations, then, to the Muslim religious authorities behind the crafting and passage of the *fatwah*. And my fervent hope that Filipino Muslims, especially the women, use this guidance to better their lives and seize control of their destinies.

* * *

LAST Sunday, I was in Cagayan de Oro as the commencement speaker at the graduation ceremonies of St. Mary's School upon the invitation of the school's president, Dr. Marilou Palabrica Costello.

The school was founded about 20 years ago by Marilou and her late husband Michael, mainly to ensure a good secondary education for their twin daughters right in their hometown.

The twins are now doctors, both preparing to go to the US for their specialty training, while the Costellos' two younger children are starting their own careers. Michael, a well-known sociologist who headed Xavier University's Research Institute on Mindanao Culture, had planned to devote himself full-time to the school after he left the university, but he died in a Cebu Pacific plane crash some years ago. Before then, Marilou had been based in Manila, and Michael's passing cemented her decision to relocate.

Still, her commitment to St. Mary's remains, though the school now is administered by her sister, Dr. Perla Palabrica.

* * *

ST. MARY'S commencement was a short and sweet affair. Though the student population remains small, it has long prided itself in the quality of its graduates, many of whom get accepted into the top universities in Manila.

There also seems to be quite a good and strong relationship between the school and the parents, some of whom were recognized for their outstanding involvement in school affairs. Indeed, the commencement rites seemed like a family affair, with everyone present cheering up the graduates.

But St. Mary's is not all about academics. Marilou takes pride in the school's reputation for artistic development, with its glee club, dramatics club and dance troupe receiving much public acclaim. Its annual stage play, which is open to the public, is a much-awaited social event in the city, I'm told.

How fortunate Cagayan de Oro is for having such dedicated educators behind St. Mary's, devoted to providing quality education to young men and women many of whom are now doing their school and city proud in the wider world beyond the city limits.

The Archbishop's pound of flesh (II)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE DEATH of the magistrate Diego Antonio de Viga in Cagayan due to an illness was preceded by terrible events. The holy sacraments were denied him because he did not make the retractions that a Dominican demanded of him. The news spread quickly in Manila, causing much scandal.

"Father," the dying man pleaded with the religious, "hear my confession for I am dying."

"I can't," responded the Dominican, "unless you do not denounce first what you voted and executed in the Royal Audiencia regarding the exile of the archbishop and some of the religious of my order."

Viga answered him, "Father, how can I retract when I never considered it wrong and I thought requesting the ecclesiastical judge for the juridical edict fulfilled my duty? In signing the provisions of exile without that edict I made a very formal judgment following the Royal rules. Since my conscience is clear how can I now go against this judgment when I considered what I did for the good of the public?" But the religious was adamant and refused to administer the sacraments unless Viga obeyed.

Finally Viga declared, "Sirs, my asking for confession at this hour is not because of a grievous sin or because my conscience bothers me but the desire to die with the Last Sacrament of Catholicism and if there is no man to hear my confession I shall confess to God. Give me the crucifix." Embracing it, he died without the sacraments but attached to the symbol of our redemption.

This disgraceful event became known in Manila because one of Viga's guards, who thereafter returned to the capital, recounted the tragedy to all who listened. The soldier was said to have disappeared; when Fr. Juan de Jesus, a former provincial of San Agustin, tried to see him to verify the story, he was unable to find him.

The archbishop and others in his religious order insisted that everyone who had agreed to his exile be excommunicated, including the governor then, the magistrates, the masters of camp, the sergeant major, captains, soldiers and scribes.

The matter could have been settled more amicably but even the wife of D. Pedro Bolivar was made responsible for her husband's actions although she had nothing to do with the case. She was exiled and imprisoned in the town of Orion, the sacraments denied her because she would not make a retraction that a Dominican demanded at the hour of her death. The poor woman asked for a Jesuit priest to hear her confession and she was told there was none available. Instead a Franciscan came but found her dead when he arrived. The archbishop then ordered that since she had died impenitent she was not to be buried on sacred grounds.

Both the pope and the king sided with the archbishop and this apparently emboldened the latter more. Dean Cobarrubias was sent to Madrid but he was dispossessed of his houses, all his jewelry, and his salary. In the 20 months that he was imprisoned, he sustained himself by begging and none of his property was assigned to help him out. His passage was not paid for and he had to beg from the archbishop who promptly denied it so that he sailed in utmost misery.

The cantor Jeronimo de Herrera was meted the terrible sentence of degradation or being defrocked, relegating him to the secular order. But the bishop of Troya may have felt the sentence too severe and commuted it to perpetual exile in the Marianas where he died full of miseries.

There were two ships leaving on the same day, one directly to the Marianas and the other to Acapulco, but Herrera was obliged to sail on the latter forcing him to travel 4,000 leagues through stormy weather and tempestuous seas. After many months of navigation he died, asking in his last hour in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament that the archbishop pardon him if he had erred in any way.

But it was against the Jesuits that the archbishop vented his ire. While the church of San Ignacio was full of the faithful celebrating the feast day of its patron, the ministers of the prelate posted an edict on its doors declaring the church violated because of the internment of Grimaldos. The mass was suspended and the congregation dismissed. The archbishop wished to have the departed man's body exhumed and removed. The problem was it could not be proven with certainty that Grimaldos had died impenitent. The case had been pending for five years and nothing had been proven.

Consequently, on St. Ignatius' feast day the sepulchre was opened only to find bone upon bone mixed with those of other cadavers; Grimaldos could not be identified. After all the scandal nothing was removed.

What does this tell us or what do old stories have to do with us, you might ask. Only the old adage that absolute power corrupts as we see daily in our national life. Obviously, we have neither learned nor want to learn from the past.

(Extracts from Blair & Robertson).

Staying behind

YOUNG BLOOD

Sara Zoe L. Sangco

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I RECENTLY read an article written by a young Filipina who finished two master's degrees from a university in Germany. It was a critique on the political situation of the Philippines, and an explanation as to why the writer, who works in Paris, does not wish to return. I was so disgusted by her analysis that I felt compelled to respond.

The writer says that many Filipinos working in Europe share her opinion that as long as they can get stable career opportunities there, they will not return to the Philippines because of the worsening political situation, which is underscored by FPJ's candidacy. She recounts how embarrassed she was when her friend from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs broke the news that the Philippines' next president will again be an actor. In response to this, the writer says: "Please spare me. In behalf of the Filipino academics in Europe, please spare us." It surprised me how someone who completed two master's degrees by the age of 24 could compose a line that was ignorant at the very least, and arrogant at best. Millions of our countrymen are starving, unemployed, uneducated, homeless, sick or dying from diseases that already have vaccines or cures, because of the lack of medical resources in our country. These are the people who will be affected by the results of the coming elections, and yet the writer is asking us to spare her, who is gainfully employed in a first-world country. Her reason: "While all of us are trying to show others how smart Filipinos are, many of our countrymen are making stupid choices." In other words, we should choose wisely for those who have chosen to leave our country for the career opportunities available in Europe. After all, we have to consider their reputations there when we make decisions about our future here in the Philippines.

Is this really the image that we want the Philippines to have? That our country produces "brilliant academics" from leading universities who have no love of country and feel no moral obligation to their motherland? And worse, who speak about our country and our people with disdain, for making choices that have embarrassed Filipinos in Europe. What good is the intelligent and educated to our country if they refuse to return until the situation has improved and/or is suitable to their lifestyle?

The writer is blaming us, who have stayed behind, but she herself takes no responsibility for the country's present condition. Her "spare me" comment is testimony to that. She, who has turned her back on her role and responsibility in the development of this country, is lecturing us about ours. Personally, I have more pride in blue-collar workers who didn't finish high school than I have for these so-called "brilliant academics," who have the credentials to help the Philippines, and yet will do nothing more than criticize and whine about how the goings-on in our country turns them into the "laughingstock" of their university.

I am not a fan of FPJ, but I understand why many of my countrymen are. The writer mentions the Estrada scandal and poses the question, "How much more does someone have to endure in order to be convinced that an actor should never again sit as the chief executive?" Again, her ignorance shines through. I did not vote for Estrada in the last elections, and I doubt if the writer did. The impeachment scandal had nothing to do with Estrada being an actor; it had everything to do with his unexplained wealth. We who flocked to Edsa II did so because majority of the senators involved in the impeachment trial voted against opening the envelope which would have disclosed the details of Jose Velarde's bank account. We flocked to Edsa II because justice was not served, and that—not Estrada's career as an actor—was unacceptable to us.

Besides, what radical change has taken place during the Macapagal administration that would have taught my countrymen the lessons that the writer wants them to learn? The peso is at an all-time low, while unemployment is at an all-time high. Is this the change that was supposed to convince them that Estrada was the worst president in the history of the Philippines, and consequently, that they should not vote for another actor? The writer further claims: "Having heads of state from show business is the ultimate irony for anyone who knows of the Filipinos' reputation for intelligence." I doubt if she is aware that some time ago, President Macapagal-Arroyo, a former student of Georgetown University and a Doctor of Economics, starred in six episodes of the Cebuano drama "Bastunero." Furthermore, GMA has publicly admitted that she had always wanted to be an actress. Hence, to suggest that actors are people who lack intelligence is judgmental, and an unwarranted conclusion.

In 1965, the Philippines elected a brilliant lawyer as president. His name was Ferdinand Marcos. He ruled for 20 years, placed the Philippines under martial law for 14 of those years, violated basic human rights and plunged the country into a debt so astronomical, our grandchildren's children will still be paying for it. Following the writer's argument, if we are to learn from our mistakes, then wouldn't the logical conclusion be never again to elect a brilliant man to sit as the chief executive?

Thus, to cite that "many of our countrymen are making stupid choices" because of the strength of FPJ's candidacy is an assumption that can only be made by someone who does not realize the depths of poverty and desperation that millions of Filipinos face every day. How can we penalize our countrymen for making choices that they believe will fulfill their most basic needs?

My countrymen aren't making "stupid choices." They are being naive and hopeful, as many of us are when we cast our votes on election day. We will be choosing someone who we deem to be responsible and qualified, and we hope that he/she will live up to those expectations.

I am not embarrassed that Estrada was president; I am proud that he was impeached and eventually eased out of office without a drop of blood being shed. I will not be embarrassed if FPJ wins the election in May, although I have no plans of voting for him. What does embarrass me are those "brilliant" Filipinos in Europe, the "cream of the crop" in their respective academic fields, who look down on their countrymen, and who think that to be perceived as intelligent is of paramount importance.

The writer and I agree on one point and that is on her title: Staying Put. I'm relieved that she has no plans of returning to the Philippines. By all means, she should stay in Paris and build her career. She can continue to strive to save the Filipinos' reputation as a "smart, clever and talented people." She can finish 10 master's degrees from leading European universities; she can be the "cream of the crop" in her respective field; it doesn't matter. My beloved country deserves better.

Sara Zoe L. Sangco, 23, is studying for an M. A. in English Language and Literature and teaches at the Ateneo University.

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'Heroes of Manila Bay' deserve real help

LITTLE lives making a difference—this is what I think of the 40 fishermen who are members of the Nagkakaisang Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Cavite (Namamangca). On Feb. 27, these fishermen saved 182 passengers of the burning SuperFerry 14, carrying the passengers ashore to safety. They did this task with the help of the provincial government's Task Force Kalikasan and the Philippine Coast Guard who monitored the situation and coordinated the rescue effort.

For saving people's lives, these fishermen did not receive—nor did they ask for—monetary reward. For this, as in previous maritime accidents, they were hailed as heroes by the media. But besides stories about this dramatic rescue effort, not much is written about their daily lives, which are no less heroic.

Rafael Mendoza and other members of Namamangca maintain a 60-hectare fish sanctuary that they hope will help sustain their fish catch. Jowie Zapanta is a member of the Task Force Kalikasan that, along with Namamangca, has conducted regular boat patrols for a year now to guard the municipal waters against the intrusion of commercial fishers and other forms of illegal fishing. The boat patrols have reduced the incidence of illegal fishing by 60 percent in only one year.

Rene Bernal heads the El Gancho Multi-Purpose Cooperative whose members are the fisherfolk around Manila Bay. Since 1998, this cooperative has managed a consumer store that provides the members with basic commodities at lower prices. For its part, Namamangca recently ventured into tahong farming with some assistance from the provincial government of Cavite. According to the fisherfolk, the provincial government of Cavite is now responsive because of their persistent advocacy work.

Contrary to the common view that the poor are lazy or ignorant, the fisherfolk in Cavite have shown that they are industrious and capable of managing not only the coastal resources but also an alternative livelihood like the consumer store. And when called upon to respond in times of disasters, they do not hesitate to save lives—in exchange for nothing more than the gratitude of those they have saved.

Indeed,·what do the fisherfolk get for their heroism and sacrifice? Why does the national government revoke DAO 17, instead of supporting the fisherfolk in their fight for their preferential use rights over the coastal resources? Why does the government continue to give them doles, instead of adequate funding support for their development projects?

—JAIME ESCOBER JR.,
information officer,
Tambuyog Development Center,
91 V. Luna Road Extension,
Sikatuna Village,
Quezon City

Government mismanaged its privatization policy

IN THE PAST week, Maynilad has been in the limelight. Sadly, the publicity has not been favorable. Having served as Maynilad's president from Oct. 16, 1999 to Feb. 9, 2004, I am compelled to defend my reputation as well as that of the Lopez Group's and Maynilad's employees.

There are four documents that:

1. Explain Maynilad's ill-fated journey since August 1997, and the controversial compromise agreement;
2. Explain why the compromise agreement is neither a bailout nor a midnight deal, and that it is advantageous to government;
3. Present the Group's philanthropic involvements and accomplishments which are not well-known by public.

The documents debunk allegations that Maynilad was mismanaged, and that it had done nothing to improve service delivery and the water system from the time it took over the West Zone Concession.

If any statement is to be asserted it is that government mismanaged its privatization policy at the expense of the private sector and the consuming public, and placed the government's reputation and the economy at greater risk.

—RAFAEL M. ALUNAN III

Consultations did not include local communities

I WOULD like to react to the letter titled "Where were opposers during public consultations?" (PDI, 1/14/04) by Arthur C. Pascua. The letter said that Ifma/TLA holders and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources conducted multi-sectoral public hearings/consultations, where all were invited to voice out their positions on the matter, including local government units, people's organizations and non-government organizations in the affected municipalities before the Ifma/TLA were awarded.

For me, Pascua's claim is a lie. Our municipality (Dinalungan) was included in the approved Ifma and RCCTCI signed by former Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez last December 2001. But no public consultations/hearings were conducted in our town before the Ifma was awarded.

Now Pascua is asking "Where were opposers during public consultations held in Baler, Aurora last Nov. 6, 2001? The invitation was addressed only to the municipal mayors and Sangguniang Bayan members. The invitation did not include the local communites/individuals who are petitioners as well as the indigenous community. Dinalungan is about 90 kilometers away from Baler, four hours ride and P90 in bus fare. How could poor people from Northern Aurora—Dinalungan, Casiguran, Dilasag reach Baler without P200 to spare to get there? Besides, they were not invited, and why in Baler? Are there any logging operations approved in the municipality of Baler?

Aurora's topography is 70 percent mountainous, facing the Pacific Ocean, typhoon belt area, therefore we are more prone to suffer flashfloods, soil erosion and other environmental catastrophes. People engaged in fishing and farming, once the uplands are damaged, will be adversely affected. We have to accept the reality that Ifma/TLA holders harvest and utilize premium wood species. To replace the trees, they are planting gmelina and mahogany, exotic species usually prone to infestation.

The continued existence of these Ifma/TLA will definitely destroy the watershed, ricefields and marine ecosystem. The local population and future generations have the right to enjoy the remaining God-given natural resources before these are also lost.

—MARILYN MARQUEZ,
mayor, Dinalungan, Aurora

Gawad Kalinga way of building houses

OUR poor people place too much hope in politics and politicians. But dirty, dishonest and corrupt politics is making the poor poorer.

There is an effective solution to the basic problem of the poor—Gawad Kalinga.

It would be good if all our candidates led by Raul Roco, Fernando Poe Jr., Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Bro. Eddie Villanueva and their vice presidential candidates together with their Senate candidates and candidates for Congress will spend a few hours during the election campaign to help build houses for the poorest of the poor through Gawad Kalinga. For then and only then can we help make the Philippines slum-free.

Helping Gawad Kalinga is surely the best way for our candidates to show they do care for the poorest of the poor.

Overseas Filipinos are now raising funds to help the community projects of Gawad Kalinga. What is good in Gawad Kalinga is that it is helping the poor regardless of their religious belief, political affiliation, ethnic background, color of skin and the dialects they speak.

—OSCAR R. LANDICHO,
2 Goodenia Court,
Voyager Point NSW 2171,
Australia

SSS, ECC disability loans granted

THIS is in response to the letter titled "ECC reply to employee's complaint." (PDI, 2/10/04)

Our records show that Alberto Paragas (SSS No. 02-0054174-1) has been granted permanent partial disability benefit for the lumbar disc disease he sustained on Dec. 26,1996.

Paragas received permanent partial disability benefit amounting to P70,360.90 from the Social Security System and P78,999.15 under the Employees' Compensation Program, which the SSS administers. He started receiving his SSS retirement pension on Nov. 21, 1999.

We have received a letter from the ECC asking that the member's case be referred to them for review. SSS Tarlac branch medical officers have been instructed to forward to the main office Paragas' medical findings and other records. These documents will be forwarded to the ECC for its evaluation.

Paragas is yet to report to SSS Tarlac for physical examination. Hence, his claim for additional EC disability cannot be acted upon.

—JOEL P. PALACIOS,
assistant vice president,
Media Affairs Department,
Social Security System,
East Avenue, Diliman,
Quezon City

Give FPJ a chance to prove worth

THIS is a reaction to the opinion of Mr. Isagani A. Cruz on the "Perils of a Poe Presidency." (PDI, 2/22/04)

I only realized lately that he is anti "school dropouts." He does not believe that uneducated people can perform well if given the chance. As a former teacher, I know two reasons why people become "school dropouts." One reason is due to poverty so that parents are financially incapable of sending their children to school. The second reason is laziness or mental inability of the child to comprehend lessons that are given by the teacher.

Education, however, is not a guarantee to someone's success in life. There were those who graduated with honors, but who are "failures" in life. It is in the individual, or as the saying goes, "life is what we make it."

"The Perils of a Poe Presidency" is the third I read of his column criticizing and dismissing Poe's aspirations to the presidency for his lack of qualifications and his being a "high school dropout."

Mr. Cruz says that "the followers of FPJ, let alone his cerebral advisers, should realize that it takes more than a handsome face and make-believe skills in overcoming tinsel villains to solve the mammoth problems of the country. What is actually needed is competence, a deep sense of humility and the indispensable trait of patriotism that "Ang Panday" so effectively exhibited on celluloid.

I would say that it takes more than experience in governance and vast knowledge in economics that makes a good president and a leader of the country. More than these, a good president of our Republic needs sincerity, honesty and dedication to his work and constituents. Our leaders today have more of politics and less of credibility. We need someone who is not a politician. By politician, I mean one who is only good in platforms and promises but who after being elected forgets that he should be worthy of his victory to the people.

We installed Ms Cory Aquino as our President in spite of her lack of experience in governance; Mr. Fidel Ramos because of his vast experience in governance; we dislodged President Joseph Estrada because of his alleged corrupt administration; and put into power Ms Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, an economist, and yet our economy has worsened.

This President and her predecessors have failed because of too much politics. Their priorities have been to pay their indebtedness to politicians and businessmen instead of their duties and obligations to the people.

FPJ will be an exception because he is not beholden politically to anybody except the people. The fear that FPJ will be dictated on or manipulated is baseless presumption. I believe in his dignity and true character as a man of principle.

I am not only a fan of FPJ but also a concerned citizen like others. Let us give him a chance to prove his worth without any reservation because his success in life is a proof that he is not a dumb after all.

—ANTONIO DOMINGO,
Brgy. 22 P.M. Castro St.,
Laoag City

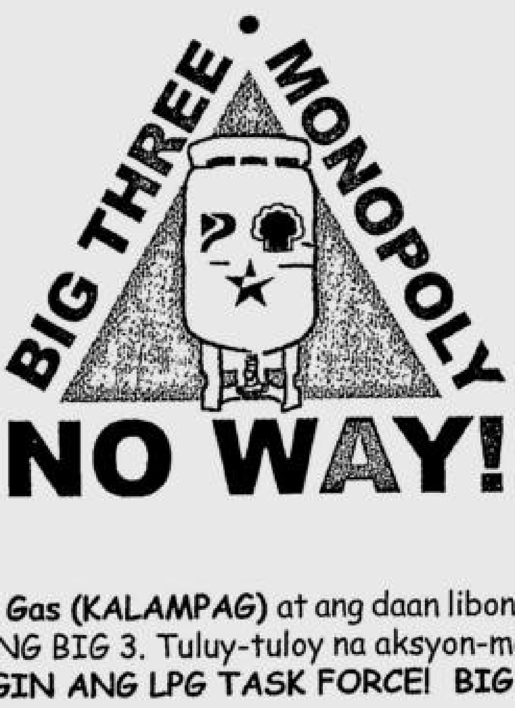
Bakit napakamahal na ng LPG ?!#

Ang katotohanan sa likod ng pagtataas ng presyo ng gas

LPG o liquified petroleum gas--isang napakahalagang sangkap sa pagluluto sa kusina ng bawat kabahayan at maging sa mga komersyal na establisyamento. Mula sa presyong P210 noong nakaraang taon ay umabot na hanggang sa P350 ang isang LPG sa pagpasok ng 2004. Ibig sabihin, ang 12 milyong pamilya na gumagamit ng LPG ay kailangang pasanin ang taas-babang presyo nito. **Ang tanong: Bakit nga ba patuloy ang pagtaas ng presyo ng LPG? Sino ba ang dapat managot dito?**

Tatlong higanteng kumpanya ang nangingibabaw sa industriya ng petrolyo—ang Shell, Caltex at Petron. Sila ang BIG 3. Sa industriya ng LPG, 69% ng pamilihan ay kontrolado ng Big 3. Ang natitirang 31% ay pinaghahatian ng mga maliliit na refillers ng LPG. Dahil dito, nagagawang magkutsabahan ng Shell, Petron at Caltex para itakda ang presyo ng LPG ayon sa kanilang kagustuhan.

ISANG MALAKING PANLOLOKO at PANGGAGANTSO ng BIG 3 sa mga kumukunsumo ng LPG ang nangyayaring pagtataas ng presyo nito. Ang LPG ay maituturing na latak na nakukuha sa gasolina at iba pang produktong petrolyo. Ang tanging gastos dito ay storage at refrigeration. Walang gastos ang mga suplayer ng langis sa pag-aangkat ng LPG. Kaya't walang dahilan na patuloy na pataasin ng Big 3 ang presyo ng LPG sa pamilihan.



At upang lubusan nang makontrol ng Big 3 ang buong suplay ng LPG sa pamilihan, kailangan nitong durugin ang operasyon ng mga maliliit na refillers na nagbebenta ng murang LPG. Sa basbas ng Department of Energy (DoE), binuo ang LPG Task Force na sa halip na protektahan ang mamimili ay ginagamit na instrumento ng Big 3 para matupad ang hangarin nito na alisin ang kakumpetensya at maprotektahan ang monopolyo nito sa industriya. Sa huli, TAYONG MGA KUMUKUNSUMO NG LPG ANG DIREKTANG BIKTIMA NG PAKANANG ITO NG BIG 3.

Karapatan ng mamimili na itaguyod ang tunay at nararapat na presyo ng LPG na dapat ay mas mababa pa sa daily minimum wage ng isang manggawa. Kami—ang mga pamilya sa bawat tahanan, manggagawa, at mga maliliit na negosyante ang bumubuo sa isang kilusan upang wakasan ang pagmomonopolyo ng BIG 3 sa industriya ng LPG.

Ang Kilusan Laban sa Mataas na Presyo ng Gas (KALAMPAG) at ang daan libong konsyumer ng LPG ay magkakaisang KIKILOS upang ILANTAD AT LABANAN ANG MONOPOLYO NG BIG 3. Tuluy-tuloy na aksyon-masa ang isasagawa upang marinig ang aming sigaw:
IBABA ANG PRESYO NG LPGI BUWAGIN ANG LPG TASK FORCEI BIG 3-HIGANTENG PUMAPATAY SA MAMIMILI!

KALAMPAG
(KILUSAN LABAN SA MATAAS NA PRESYO NG GAS)

ALAB KATIPUNAN PARTYLIST
AK Partylist

LEJUN DE LA CRUZ
1st Nominee, Alab Katipunan Partylist

GINA DE LA CRUZ
Secretary General, Alab Katipunan Partylist

ILDEFONSO SILVA
Chairman, Alab Katipunan Partylist

ALEX BARRIENTOS
President, PAL Employees Association

PETER VILLASEÑOR
Small Retailers

ED OREDINA
PAL Employees Association

CARLITO RALLISTAN
President, Alliance of Democratic Labor Organizations (ADLO)

WILFREDO DE LA CRUZ
National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU)

JUN AGAN
MIASCOR Workers Union-NLU

ROMMEL ZAMBRANO
Secretary General, Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas (KPMP)

VIC ALBURO
Ugnayan ng Maralita Laban sa Kahirapan (UMALAB-KA)

MONALIZA ALBURO
Sandigan at Kilusan ng Aktibong Kabataan (SIKLAB)

JONARD GABRINO
Kilusan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (KAAKBAY)

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Duterte campaign stopped by rebels

DAVAO CITY—Communist rebels forcibly drove away campaigners of Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's Hugpong sa Tawong Lungsod (Alliance of the City People) party, who went to Paquibato district here on Saturday, a party official said yesterday.

Wendel Avisado, Hugpong secretary general, yesterday told reporters here that their supporters were serving as an advance team for the party's candidates when a group of NPA rebels stopped them from entering Paquibato proper.

Hugpong candidates were scheduled to conduct a rally in at least three villages in the district on Saturday but it was not immediately known whether Duterte was among them.

Avisado said the rebels asked their supporters to get out of the area because the party has not paid permit-to-campaign fees yet.

Paquibato district is a known stronghold of the communist rebels.

The NPA has repeatedly said it would only allow candidates into its areas if they have paid the necessary permit-to-campaign fees.

The incident forced Hugpong to reschedule its campaign in the district.

But Avisado said Duterte was steadfast in his decision not to give in to the rebels' demand.

He said the mayor has urged party members and campaigners to continue with their activities.

"The harassment would not prevent us from going to those areas," Avisado said.

Luis Jalandoni, chair of the peace panel of the clandestine National Democratic Front (NDF), said the collections would continue even if this would be raised in the next round of talks with the government panel set on March 30 to April 2 in Oslo, Norway.

"The political candidates are the ones who are approaching the revolutionary movement because they recognize our influence and capacity," Jalandoni said on Friday through phone patch from the NDF international office in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

He spoke to around 100 delegates of the regional assembly of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Panay held here. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau with a report from Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Cops study Comelec control over Isabela town

CABAGAN, Isabela—The provincial police are planning to place this town under the control of the Commission on Elections following the killing of six people, including a village chief, in an ambush on March 24.

But Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, said the ambush was "an isolated case" that would not warrant the placing of the town under Comelec control.

He also said the town had no history of election-related violence.

Only Echague town was placed in the police watch list of "immediate areas of concern." Also placed in the list of "areas of concern" are Santiago City and Naguilian, Alicia, Angadanan, Jones, San Mariano, San Pablo, Ilagan and Mallig towns due to cases of intense political rivalry, presence of armed political supporters, violence and election-related killings.

The mayoral election in Cabagan town would pit Nationalist People's Coalition candidate Mila Albano-Mamauag, daughter of resigned Isabela representative and now Energy Regulatory Commission chair Rodolfo Albano Jr., against Francisco Flores, an independent candidate.

For the vice mayoral post, Rene Albano of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino is up against Oliver Masigan Sr., a member of the Masigan political clan in nearby Sta. Maria town and a Lakas-CMD candidate.

Nario said the Cabagan police have yet to identify the killers in the ambush. Among those killed were San Antonio village captain Rosenelli Baccay, 40, and her husband Nestor Baccay, 42.

"We are facing a blank wall as of now but we are intensifying our intelligence buildup. Sooner or later, the suspects will be known and arrested," Nario said. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

9 Negros Oriental areas tagged as hot spots

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Commission on Elections has tagged three cities and six municipalities in Negros Oriental as "areas of concern."

Rogelio Benjamin, Comelec provincial supervisor, said the cities of Canlaon, Tanjay and Bais and the towns of Vallahermoso, Guihulngan, Jimalalud, Ayungon, Siaton and Sta. Catalina have been classified as areas of concern due to perceived "intense political rivalry, history of political violence and presence of armed group."

Benjamin said that at the height of the campaign in the 2001 elections, communist rebels killed former vice mayor and mayoralty candidate Jose "Ondo" Cardenas, his sister Jessica who was a city councilor, and four of their companions in an ambush in Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City.

He said that in 2001, there was a reported post-election violence between two warring parties in Vallahermoso. He, however, did not elaborate.

Benjamin said there were indications that elections in Ayungon, Jimalalud, Siaton, Bais and Tanjay would be hotly contested.

In Ayungon, provincial board member Lorenzo Dy is running for mayor against former ally and incumbent Mayor Edsel Enardecido. Dy used to be mayor of Ayungon before he ran for and won a seat in the provincial board.

Former Mayor Renaldo Tuanda of Jimalalud is challenging the reelection bid of Mayor Nickon Erames.

The mayoralty race in Tanjay is being contested by incumbent Mayor Baltazar Salma and his former backer, businessman Nilo Tam.

The presence of New People's Army rebels in Guihulngan and Sta. Catalina is the main reason these towns have been classified as areas of concern. *Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

₱1M in reward released to Leyte anti-kidnap informant

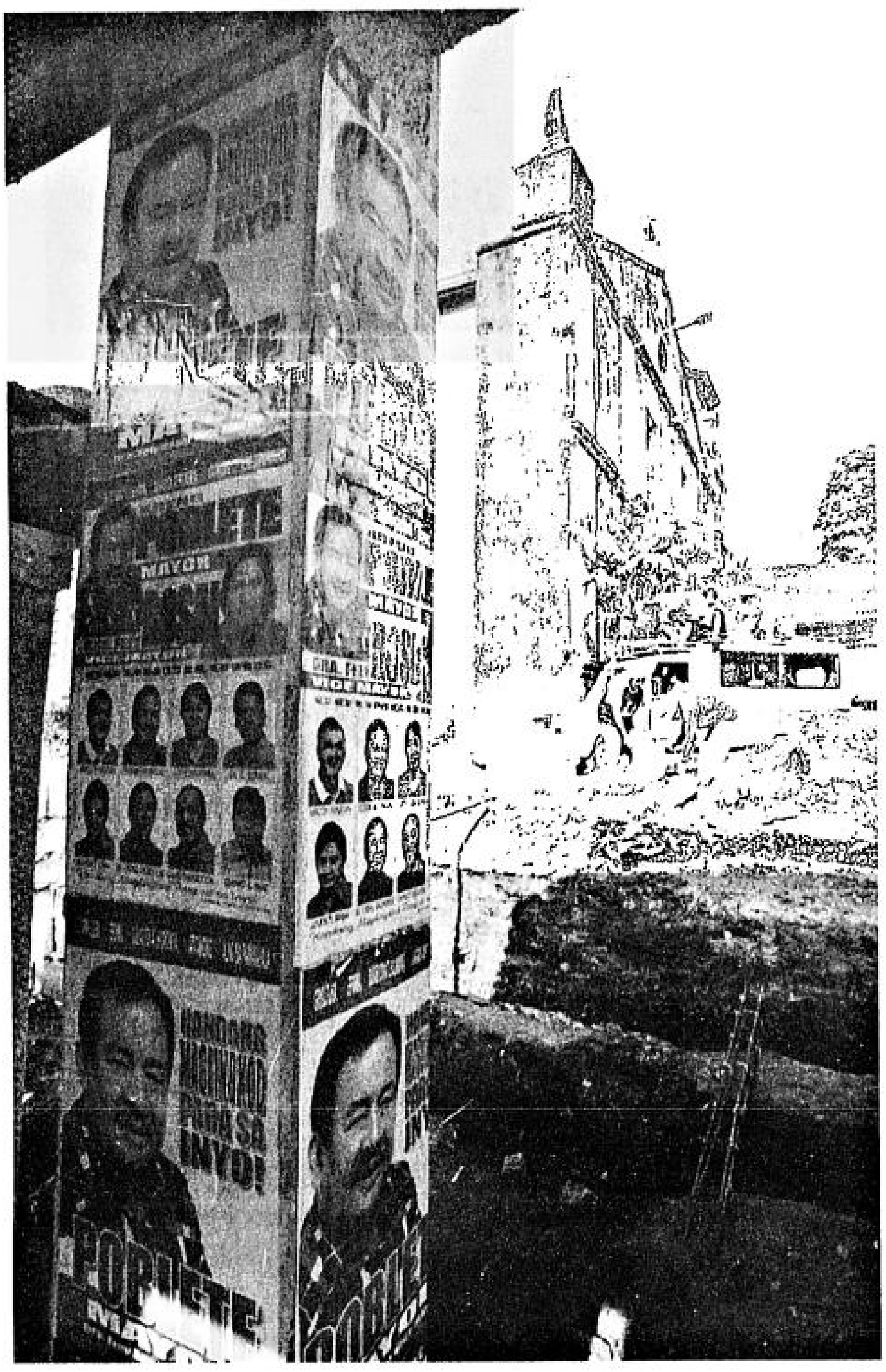
A P1-MILLION reward has been released to an informant in Leyte who led to the arrest of a top member of a kidnapping group, a government anti-kidnapping group announced yesterday.

Angelo Reyes, head of the Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, announced the released on March 9 of the P1-million reward to an informant in Leyte who provided tips that led to the arrest of Allan Niegas, no. 4 in the most wanted list of kidnappers.

Niegas was arrested in December last year but the release of the reward took some time because of safety and security concerns for the informant in Leyte.

In a statement, Reyes said all informants who would lead to the arrest of suspected kidnappers anywhere in the country, especially in the provinces, would be provided full security and protection by the task force.

He said aside from informants who stand to receive rewards, also helping in the anti-kidnapping campaign are non-government organizations and other groups.



GRAVE OFFENSE BETOY JOHNSON
Candidates for various local positions in Silang, Cavite choose no spot to put their posters on. While the Comelec has defined common poster areas, campaign materials of local candidates keep turning up even in the most unlikely places like on the post of this waiting shed beside a church where human remains had been dug up.

Soldiers say 3 NPA rebs slain in Ilocos clashes

CANDON CITY—Three communist rebels were believed killed in a 30-minute gunfight with government soldiers early yesterday in Barangay Bugnay here, an Army official said.

Col. Mechor Dilodilo, commander of the Army's 503rd Infantry Brigade, said the residents had told soldiers that the bodies of at least three New People's Army rebels had been taken by their companions.

"The successful operation was the result of full cooperation and vigilance of the residents," Dilodilo said.

He said his men clashed with 15 to 20 rebels. He said they recovered from the encounter area two Armalite rifles and anti-government papers and personal belongings.

"They planned to celebrate their 35th founding anniversary in the area and we caught them off guard," he said.

The rebels were preparing for breakfast when government soldiers punched on them, he said.

Dilodilo said his men started operations in the towns of Banayoyo and Galimuyod and the eastern part of Candon three days ago when residents complained of the presence of armed men.

"People were complaining because their movements were limited and their routine had been affected as they saw armed men in their farms or in nearby hills," he said.

In Bulacan, the police and the military are guarding two cell site towers of a giant telecommunications firm in San Rafael and Norzagaray towns from possible rebel attacks.

Reports reaching Supt. Arnold Gunnacao, Bulacan intelligence and investigation officer, showed that the rebels planned to destroy the facilities of Globe Telecoms for its refusal to pay revolutionary taxes.

"Globe has not been yielding to the demand (of the rebels) to pay taxes that's why they are targeting its facilities," Gunnacao told the INQUIRER.

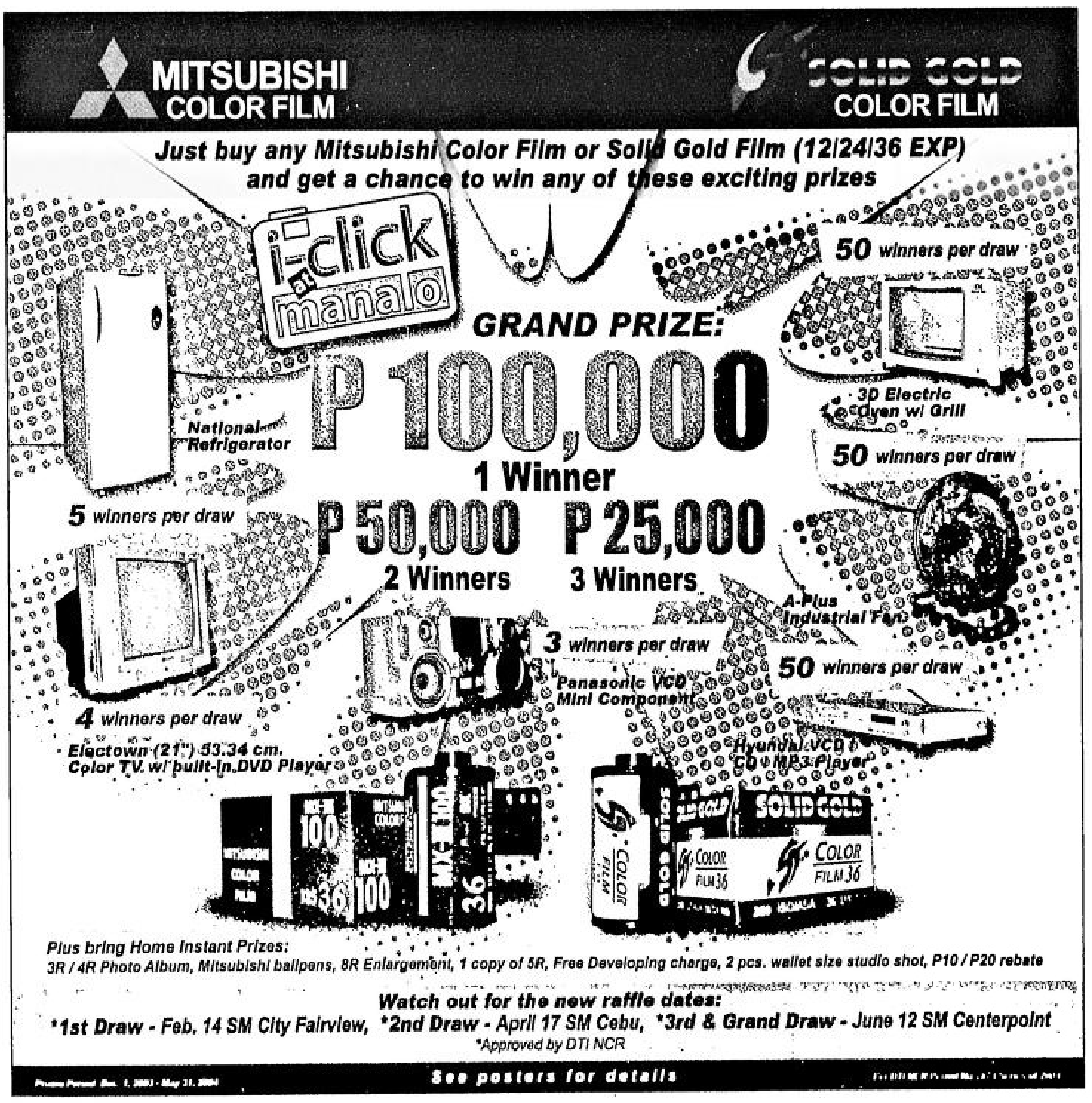
The Bulacan police and the military stationed in San Miguel, Norzagaray and Hagonoy are in full alert following the NPA's anniversary celebration.

Last year, communist rebels claimed responsibility for the killing of a marble quarry operator in San Miguel town and a municipal official of Angat town.

Also last year, four policemen were killed while several others were wounded during a two-day operation against NPA rebels in Angat and Pandi towns.

A number of NPA rebels were also reported killed in succeeding encounters.

Gunnacao said the police and the military remained in a heightened alert status because the rebels were known for staging surprise attacks. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



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See posters for details

Abductions of civilians haunt Camarines village; 7 victims still missing

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TINAMBAC, Camarines Sur—Abductions and disappearances haunt villagers here as seven of the eight persons taken by armed men from March 1-22 remained missing.

The abductions started on March 1, the day the NPA rebels ambushed a platoon of soldiers, killed one and wounded several others and captured its commander and a private.

The NPA rebels later declared Lt. Ronaldo Fedelino and Pfc. Ronnel Nemesio their "prisoners of war."

The families of the missing and a victim who had escaped from his captors have accused the military of violating the rights of their loved ones, who they said, were illegally arrested.

But Col. Serafin Raymundo, spokesperson of the military here, denied that the 9th Infantry Battalion was responsible and blamed the NPA instead.

On March 22, local government officials and the human rights group Karapatan documented at least eight victims who disappeared, but one of them escaped to tell his story.

Joel Guilan, 18, said a paramilitary man allowed him to escape from captivity.

Guilan, who sought refuge at the Bayan Muna office in Camarines Sur after the escape, told the INQUIRER that government soldiers were the perpetrators of the abductions of civilians suspected to be members of, or aiding, the NPA rebels.

He said he was taking a bath in the creek near their house when three soldiers came and asked where Juanito Guilan, his father, lived.

He said he pointed to them their house, located several meters from the creek.

When the soldiers asked his father's whereabouts, he told them that he was working in Manila.

He said one of the three soldiers told him that his father was actually an NPA rebel. They then covered his mouth and nose with a handkerchief that made him lose his consciousness.

When he woke up, he found himself above a dugout copra kiln, his hands tied at the back with a nylon chord. He was led to a cogon area and tied to a tree.

He said he saw and heard Wilfredo Velarde hollering for help at the foot of the hill while a soldier and paramilitary civilian volunteer led him to the edge.

Karapatan learned that armed men believed to be soldiers abducted Velarde and his helper Joseph Carlote on March 16.

Velarde's wife Benita, 34, said her husband and Carlote were working at their copra stockroom at about 6 a.m. when the soldiers came and started looking for high-powered firearms allegedly kept in their house. The soldiers then handcuffed him. She requested them to allow Carlote to accompany Velarde and they agreed.

The first civilian abducted was Jaime Rodriguez, 60, of Barangay Bataan, San Isidro. The most recent one is Domingo C. Mata of the same village.

FADING DAY

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

The sun bids goodbye in a most fiery manner at the Davao Gulf as if saying it would return for sure with a vengeance especially as the summer months set in.

Foreign observers see bright prospects for Mindanao peace

ILIGAN CITY—The government needs to integrate peace building into the educational system if it wants a lasting and sustainable peace, especially in Mindanao, a conflict resolution expert from Somalia said.

Mohamed Elmi Aden of the Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Group Committee (Havoyoco), said this move would pave the way for the introduction of a "culture of peace" among the youth.

"Just as Information Technology and Mathematics, as academic subjects, are taught in schools, so should the procedure of conflict handling. I believe that this idea would become a major step forward in achieving peace in Mindanao because when the children grow up, they eventually become leaders," Aden said.

The Somalian representative visited several Mindanao provinces as part of a study tour group that arrived on the island on March 14.

Francisco Lara, country director of Volunteers Service Organization (VSO)-Philippines, a group coordinating with the observers, said local peace advocates have been lobbying for the integration of peace-building lessons in the education system.

He said in Lanao del Norte, schools superintendents welcomed this initiative by accommodating workshops and symposiums designed to raise the awareness of school children on local conflict situations.

"We have already institutionalized this in the local level and we hope that the same effort will materialize as we are still asking for government action," Lara said.

The foreign observers said they noted that the people of Mindanao wanted to rebuild their lives and achieve peaceful existence.

Arlene Mahinay, program manager of VSO-Technical and Organizational Skills for Civil Society Action for Displaced and at Risk in Mindanao (Toscadar), confirmed how Muslims and Christian have realized that helping one another would lead to peaceful coexistence.

She cited the experience of Sultan Naga Dimaporo town in Lanao del Norte.

"Before we came to Sultan Naga Dimaporo, the Muslims and the Christians don't even talk to each other, because the Christians are afraid to go to the Muslim neighborhood, and so are the Muslims. But now, they are working together in improving not only their livelihood but also their relationship," Mahinay said.

Adan Sheikh Mohamed, chair of the Wajir Peace and Development Committee in Kenya, noted how families displaced by recent violence in Lanao del Norte are rebuilding their lives with the help of private volunteer groups and religious organizations.

"What the people need to do now is to sustain this peace through a concerted effort," Mohamed told the INQUIRER.

Huda Imanul, director of the People, Resource and Conservation Foundation in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, said he was so impressed by the people's effort. *Jeffrey P. Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Party-list bet vows war on PPA

COTABATO CITY—The party-list Association for the Protection of Electric Consumers said it would continue fighting the controversial Power Purchase Adjustment imposed upon all electric cooperatives in the country.

Describing it as onerous and exorbitant, APEC party-list representatives Edgar Valdez, Sunny Madamba and Ernesto Pablo have vowed to continue their fight against the PPA.

They promised to work more for the reduction of power costs, fight for total consumer ownership and block efforts to take over electric cooperatives. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Tribe seeks meet with prexy bets

INFANTA, Quezon—The tribal leaders of the indigenous Agta people that dwell in the Sierra Madre mountain ranges in northern Quezon would like to meet all the presidential aspirants to personally secure their commitment to fully implement the Ancestral Domain Law once elected.

"We would like to assess the country's next president on the present plight of the indigenous tribes in Sierra Madre. For us, the government's commitment to the full implementation of the Ipra (Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act) is now a matter of life and death for the whole Agta tribe," said Ramsey Estuveza, one of the leaders of the Adhikain ng mga Grupong Taong Katutubo na Nagtatanggol sa Lupaing Ninuno (Agta), in an interview at the three-story Tribal Development Center here.

He added: "We've had enough of those promises of a bright future for indigenous people. Yes, there were changes, but changes that are unwelcome to the tribe. Progress that is alien to our concept of true progress."

Estuveza said the Agtas are still fighting the incursion into their ancestral domain by real estate developer Green Circle Properties and Resources Inc., reportedly owned by lawyer Romeo Roxas, who plans to use at least 80,000 hectares for his ambitious Pacific Coast City project. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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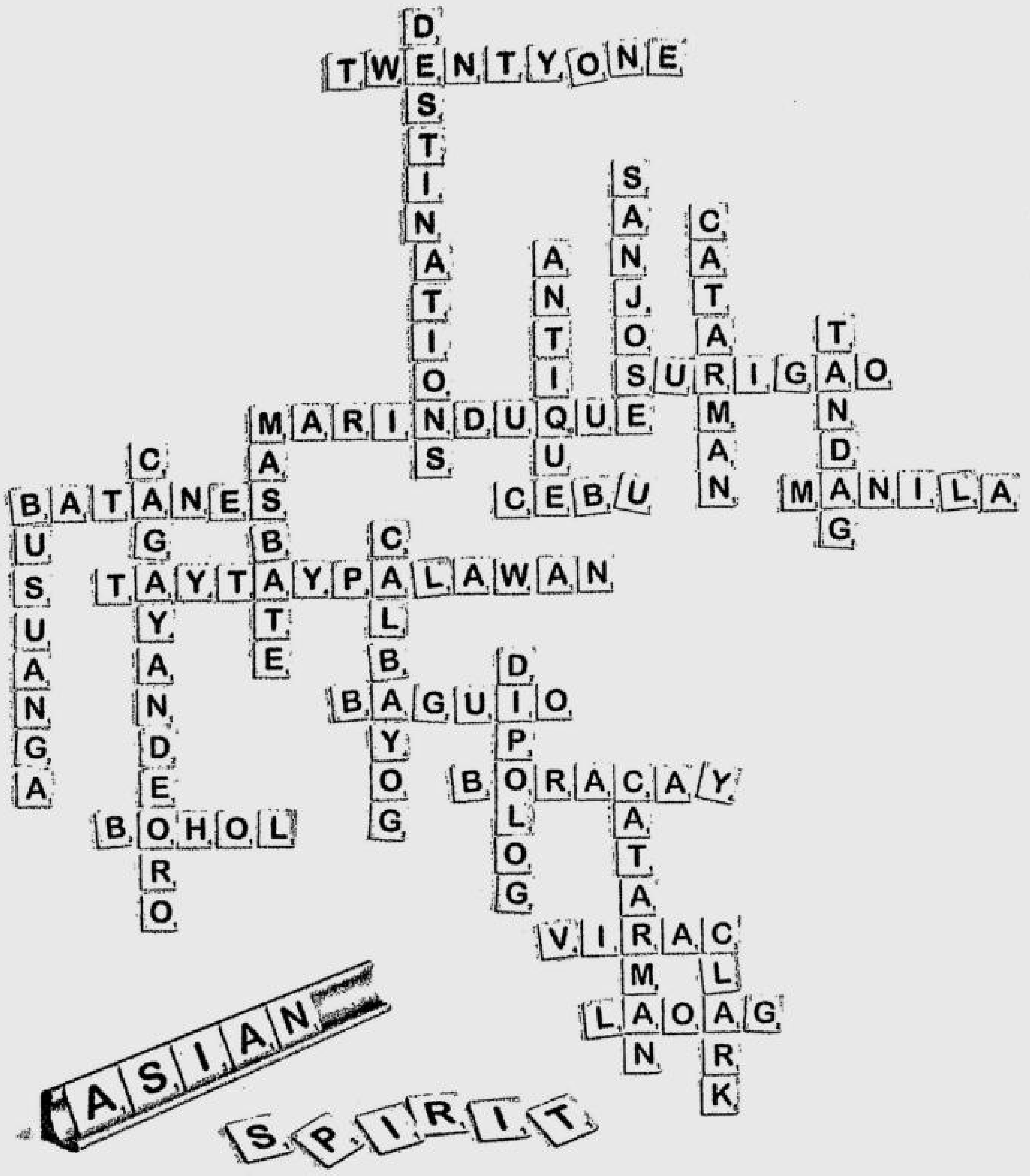

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

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3 8 3 3
(In exact order)
SUERTRES
4 3 9

MEGALOTTO 6/45
4 8 29 33 34 44

Balikbayan helps rob victim, is shot dead

By Margaux Ortiz

A BALIKBAYAN, who was an American citizen, was shot dead when he tried to help a woman being victimized by three armed robbers in Las Piñas City yesterday morning.

Michael Trinos, 59, of New York City, was killed along with Venerando Taguba, watchman of Gemcraft Pawnshop along the Alabang-Zapote Road.

P4,000 in bag

According to the police, three men on a motorcycle tried to snatch the bag of pedestrian Diana Rolio, 20, at about 10 a.m.

Rolio, who had P4,000 in the bag, put up a fight and created a commotion.

Trinos, who was waiting for his brother outside a money changing shop, ran to help Rolio.

However, one of the suspects armed with a .45-caliber pistol shot Trinos in the chest, killing him instantly.

The suspects, one of whom was armed with a 9-mm pistol, began shooting randomly at nearby private watchmen, hitting Taguba, before fleeing.

Perpetua Sumawang, a customer of a nearby restaurant was wounded when the robbers tried to shoot at the eatery's security guard but hit her instead.

Visiting sick father

The female victim was rushed to a hospital and is out of danger, police officer Roget Bato said.

Trinos, who was staying in BF Resort Village, was in the country visiting his sick father, according to an Associated Press report which quoted his sister-in-law, Connie Zialcita.

He was scheduled to return to the United States on Monday.

Year-old boy dies as 4 fires hit Metro

A YEAR-OLD boy died in one of four fires that swept through crowded residential communities in Metro Manila starting Sunday night.

The body of Erwin Vermug was charred when fire raged through a community on Doña Ana Extension, Caloocan City, starting 8:11 p.m. Sunday.

Evelyn Vermug, 27, said the blaze was started by an unattended candle which she left inside their bedroom.

At 5:30 p.m. yesterday, fire destroyed 50 shanties in Barangay Obrero, Tomas Morato, Quezon City.

As of press time, firemen were still battling the blaze through narrow alleys.

Before dawn yesterday, an hourlong fire razed P1 million in property along Iridium Street, Sta. Ana, Manila.

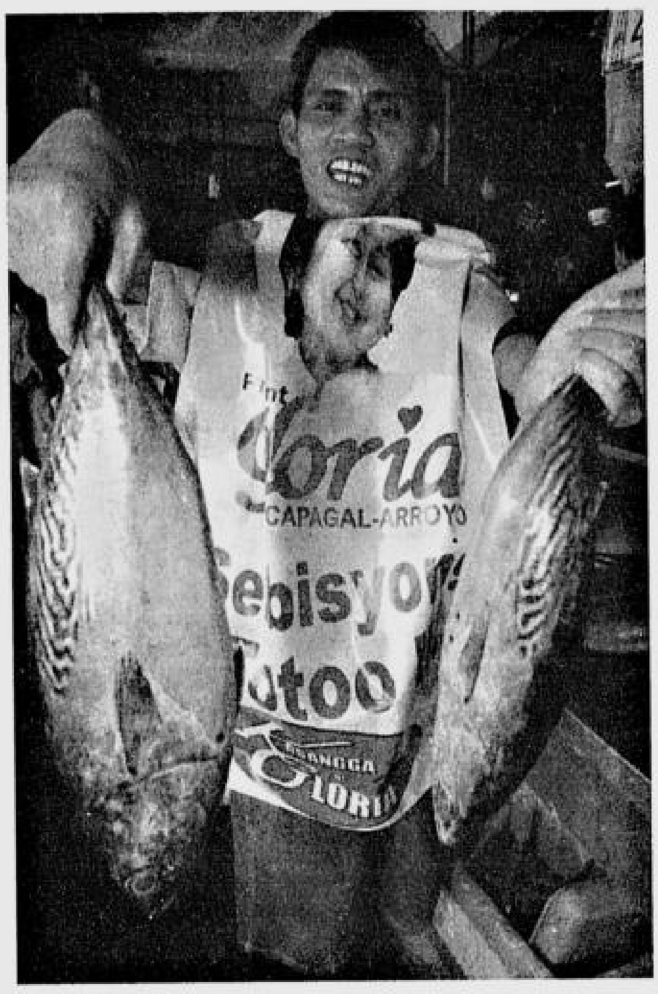
The fire began at 4:03 a.m. at the house of Danny Cerbo.

Hours earlier, at 1 a.m., a blaze gutted an apartment complex on Macabulos Street, Barangay Bangkal, Makati City.

It began at the second floor of 2016-B before spreading to the rest of the apartment owned by Alvino Reyes. *Tina Santos, Edson Tandoc, Leila Salaverria and Margaux Ortiz*

DSWD CHIEF'S FEAR

Brandy maker cashing in on 'Kinse ad' controversy



DOUBLY FISHY
A fish vendor at the Commonwealth market in Quezon City wears an apron expressing his support for the candidacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Unidentified persons reportedly distributed the apron, the use of which, along with other similar campaign paraphernalia, is prohibited by Comelec rules.
RUDY ESPERAS

By Volt Contreras

SOCIAL Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman challenged campus fraternities and other "male-dominated" civic organizations to join the protest against Napoleon Brandy's controversial "Kinse Años" ad, which religious and feminist groups have found offensive to women.

Negative publicity

Soliman made the call yesterday as she observed that the brandy manufacturer, Destileria Limtuaco, may actually be "riding on the negative publicity" generated by the issue to boost sales.

"They're benefiting from it," she said when asked in a press conference for her views on why the Destileria management was playing hardball by refusing to remove its "Kinse Años" billboards and launching legal counter-attacks on its critics.

She said the company may already be banking on "reverse psychology" to entice more male drinkers to try the 15-year-old brandy.

"Because the more you say don't, the more they (the company) believe that the macho men are tickled and would want to know what this brandy is all about," said Soliman.

"That's why it would be great if male-dominated organizations like fraternities would join (in the campaign). I challenge all of them," she said.

Self-regulated

Soliman conceded that the government cannot take legal action to force the withdrawal of the ad since advertising was among industries governed by "self-regulating" bodies.

But she said her department was "actively supporting" the campaign being waged for over a month now by various sectors against the ad.

Polls split Sotto family

SENATOR Vicente Sotto III and his daughter Lala used to sit only on opposite sides of the dinner table. Now, they are sitting on opposing ends of the political spectrum.

The senator is campaigning for Fernando Poe Jr., the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino standard bearer, while Lala, his eldest daughter, is batting for President Macapagal Arroyo of K-4.

"My Dad is for FPJ but I'm for PGMA," said the QC third district councilor, who is seeking reelection.

The younger Sotto is running under the ticket of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, also of K-4.

Lala ran as a councilor in 2001 under the ticket of former QC Mayor Ismael Mathay. She recently joined the ruling party.

Val, the senator's brother, is also running under K-4 and supporting Ms Macapagal. *Tina Santos*

Malonzo tears down stage of wife's rival

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

CALOOCAN CITY mayoralty candidate Rep. Edgar Erice cried harassment yesterday after Mayor Rey Malonzo ordered the tearing down of the stage which he was to use in a rally Sunday night.

Malonzo told the INQUIRER yesterday that he ordered Erice's stage torn down because the candidate did not get a permit from city hall.

However, Erice said they got a permit from the barangay chair.

Malonzo's wife, Gigi, is running for mayor against Erice, Rep. Enrico Echiverri and former mayor Macario Assistio Jr.

Tension began about 5 p.m. Sunday while Erice's men were preparing for their scheduled 7 p.m. rally at the corner of Malolos Avenue and Reparo Street, Barangay 154, Bagong Barrio.

Suddenly, Malonzo and some city hall officials arrived and the mayor ordered the stage dismantled, Erice's campaign officer, Bong Padua, said.

Malonzo then ordered a stage set up for his wife. He said Gigi was the first to set a rally in Bagong Barrio.

That interview with Max Soliven

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

MANY of my friends stayed up late Friday night to watch Max Soliven's interview with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Enlightened by that interview, they have changed their perception of GMA.

"She was every bit the President that she is in that interview (on Impact 2004) with Max, Mon," said Vicente.

But GMA has to exert much effort to do away with her being "pikon" (easily irritated) when she doesn't like the questions asked of her. Television is a cruel medium, it records the furrows on one's brow, the pouting of one's lips, the sharpness of one's eyes and the body language.

People noticed GMA's pouting lips when she didn't like the questions Max asked her, according to another friend, Otillo, from Tacloban.

On the whole, she did very well, said my friends.

For example, she was able to explain herself in the Jose Pidal controversy that has hounded her presidency.

The Jose Pidal account, she told the nation, was the excess contributions of supporters to her vice presidential campaign. In 1998, there was no law against using an alias in opening a bank account. But the account was closed after she became President and before the passage of the anti-money laundering law.

"All those were private money, no government transactions, no influence peddling, remember, I was not in power [then] when those contributions were made," GMA said.

One comment: She should have made that explanation during the heat of the Jose Pidal controversy.

I suggested to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to give that explanation when he was under attack on the Jose Pidal controversy during my dinners with him. I said why couldn't he tell the citizenry that the Jose Pidal account was not stolen from the government nor extorted from private individuals? He said he would heed my suggestion. But he never got around to it.

It had to take GMA to clear the air last Friday.

On the supposed influence of her husband on her administration, the President said, "...in the very beginning of my administration, *sinabi ko na, kung naghahanap kayo ng trabaho sa aking administrasyon, huwag ninyong idadaan sa aking asawa dahil kung anuman ang kanyang ibibigay sa akin ay dederetso sa basurahan* (I already said, if you're looking for a job in my administration, don't course it through my husband because whatever he promised you would go directly to the trash can)."

I can attest to that statement. I'd say the First Gentleman was able to make a few of his closest friends get some key posts in government—Efraim Genuino of Pagcor being one of them—but they had to pass through the eye of a needle.

Pssst! *Ander de saya si Mike Arroyo at ayaw niyang masigawan ni Gloria.*

Once, during the heat of the Jose Pidal controversy, Arroyo was having dinner with his friends, including myself, at a hotel restaurant. His cellular phone rings. He picks it up, speaks to the party at the other end.

He says that he is with friends, even mentioning my name, and we are dining in a restaurant in Makati. Then suddenly, Mike Arroyo's mestizo face flushes.

"*Si! Si! Ahora mismo* (Yes, yes, right away)!" he replies.

And then, he begs off, saying, "*Pambihira talaga itong si (Sen.) Ping (Lacson), pinauuwi ako ng maaga ni Gloria* (Look what Lacson has done, Gloria wants me home early)."

Apparently, Ping Lacson's accusation that Mike Arroyo was having an affair with his secretary-accountant had hit the bull's-eye.

When Mike Arroyo had gone, one of us commented: "*Siya kasi, nagpapahuli!*"

* * *

Now, back to that interview with Max Soliven.

My friend Vicente said that GMA was being presidential when she answered the question about her closest rival, Fernando Poe Jr., forthrightly.

"I do not dwell on my rivals, I dwell on what I should do. The only thing I can say is that, I really think they should present a platform, they should join the debate," she said.

Max: "Well, without that [platform], everybody can have a doctorate from Georgetown University."

"That is why, not everybody can become President," she shot back.

That was not arrogance. That brilliant retort could only come from an intellectual that GMA is.

* * *

I got this from one of the text messages sent by a friend.

"When you hear Dolphy say FPJ will make a great President, remember that the man is a professional comedian."

Try telling that to an ignorant voter. He won't listen.

OAAP SUPPORTS OUTCRY VS. KINSE ANYOS ADS

The obscene suggestion from the "Kinse Anyos Billboard Ads" of Distileria Limtuaco Co., Inc. has been the subject of public outcry and condemnation. After further investigation conducted by the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP), it was found out that the billboard structures were not owned by a legitimate member of OAAP.

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (OAAP) is a non-stock, non-profit association of outdoor advertising practitioners which practices self-regulation that strictly adheres in the formulation of the Code of Ethics & Trade Practices. The OAAP would like to give emphasis on the provisions that members are abided for, as stated in the ARTICLE II, The Code of Ethics under 1.1 of Section 1 Advertising Copy and Designs, "All layouts must conform to the standards set forth by the ADBOARD'S Code of Ethics. While the Adboard does not require all layouts to be previewed and approved prior to posting, it is strongly suggested that prior approval for posting from the Adboard be sought for layouts containing elements or copy which may be considered sensitive by certain sectors of the viewing public." Furthermore in Section 1.2 "Layouts containing elements or messages that are violative of existing national or local laws and ordinances must not be posted." And in Section 2 Outdoor Advertising Signs and Structures under 2.3.3.6 of 2.3.3 Criteria, "All display content must conform to the standards set forth by the Advertising Board of the Philippines."

In view of the above, the OAAP is very much eager to support the decision of the Advertising Board of the Philippines (ADBOARD) and other sectors of our society especially GABRIELA to dismantle the said billboards.

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THE COLUMNS
AYALA AVENUE

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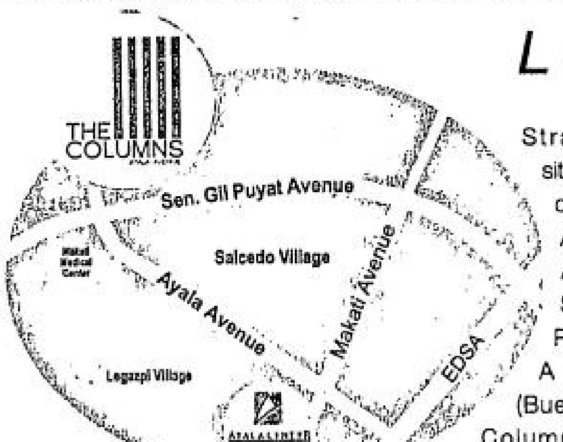

Strategically situated at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue (Buendia), The Columns, Ayala Avenue, Community Innovations Inc.'s landmark development, has come to redefine urban living. Many have already chosen it as their city address, attracted by its combination of convenience, relaxation, and prestige.

It's the ideal first home for young urban achievers who want to live a few steps from everything. Now, with Tower 3 opening for sale, it's also the last chance to embrace The Columns experience.

Garden in the City
At The Columns, Ayala Avenue, nature communes with urban living. Its open design creates a relaxing environment both in the towers and on the ground. The green Zen-like gardens that adorn the Grand Lobbies of the three towers soothe residents and guests alike.

In the Towers
Each tower offers thirty storeys, twenty-three residential floors, rising on a continuous seven-story podium. The towers are angled to catch bright morning sunshine and avoid afternoon heat. Studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units offer maximized space for the urban lifestyle, with plentiful natural light and ventilation—a prized rarity in residential condos. Splendid views stretch from the Makati skyline to Manila Bay, and selected units on each floor offer bay windows and balconies.

The Columns Experience
By integrating its amenities with its entire lifestyle, The Columns transforms itself into a relaxing refuge that openly encourages the feeling of a real neighborhood. At the seventh floor of the podium, The Recreational Club spans all three towers, and serves as the club and meeting place for this vertical village. Two pools, a fitness center, a game room, function halls, a broad outdoor patio, and a day care center and playground fit the needs of every Columns resident. A jogging path and barbecue areas offer features uncommon to condos. It's all about creating community.

The Ground Floor of The Columns offers outdoor cafes and dining spots clustered around three landscaped plazas. With its quaint shops and al fresco lifestyle, the Ground Floor aims to be a destination in itself at its end of Ayala Avenue.

Live a few steps from everything. For young, dynamic, and energetic individuals, The Columns, Ayala Avenue offers it all: location, quality, reputation, and prestige. It's a chance that's not to be missed. Tower 3 sales are now open.

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SPORTS

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SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

BASKETBALL: Cavs vs Spurs; 9:30 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports - It's the future versus the present as Cleveland's LeBron James meets San Antonio's Tim Duncan.
NBA Greatest Games - Celtics vs Sixers, Game 4, 1981 Eastern Finals; 12 noon; Solar Sports - Bitter Eastern foes Boston and Philadelphia take their rivalry to another level.
US NCAA Regional Finals; 6 p.m.; Solar Sports - It's down to the Elite Eight as two teams tangle for a slot in the Final Four.
GOLF: LPGA Safeway International; 2 p.m.; ESPN - The world's best female golfers led by 14-year old prodigy Michelle Wie attempt to make the cut in the second round.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

BAPI files contempt case vs BAP

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines, Inc. (BAPI) has filed contempt cases against 27 officials of the Basketball Association of the Philippines last week in an effort to stop its use of the name BAP, which the Court of Appeals and the Securities and Exchange Commission have ruled as one and the same with the BAPI.

With the BAP refusal to follow the CA decision recognizing the BAPI as the legitimate national sports association for basketball, BAPI legal counsel Cecil Cinco filed Civil Case No. 0410947 against secretary general Graham Lim and other BAP officials before Judge Romulo Lopez of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 34.

Also charged with Lim were BAP president Quintellano "Tiny" Literal, executive vice president and treasurer Christian Tan, VP for Luzon Alberto Lina, VP for Visayas Juan Aquino Jr., VP for Mindanao Ruben Abarquez, deputy sec gen Julian Lavadia, auditor Tony Fabico and legal counsel Bonifacio Alentajan.

Others charged were Luis Samson Jr., Manuel Gatchalian, Marius de Guzman, Ben Cue, Rafael Angeles, Johnny Tam, Emmanuel Yap, Jorge Bragat, Boy Murillo, Lucrecio Calo, Carl Fortich, Regino Cua, Miguel Domingo Jacalan III, John Utsig, Jerry Jimenez, Douglas Mosquito, Angelito Alvarez, Gil Reglo and several John Does.

According to Cinco, Lim, who is also facing deportation charges before the Bureau of Immigration for allegedly falsifying his records in his claim as a Filipino citizen, had long ignored the courts' ruling despite the CA's recognition of the BAPI as the legitimate national sports association for basketball.

Cinco said Lim has continued to misrepresent himself as secretary general while the other officials have carried on with their supposed duties as BAP officials long after the CA and the SEC have decided on the case.

"It'a time these persons started complying with the rules of the courts which they have long ignored," said Cinco. "The BAPI takes this case seriously and we are seeking all legal avenues in seeking justice for the legitimate basketball officials long bumped off by this group masquerading as the legitimate officials of the NSA for basketball."

BAPI secretary general Nic Jorge, meanwhile, urged the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission to review the merits of his case against Lim's group, saying even previous Fiba (International Basketball Federation) opinion favors the BAPI action against the BAP.

"While we continue to recognize the POC and PSC's independence, the POC being a non-government organization and the PSC, being the chief supporter of NSAs, we would also like to reiterate our position that the BAPI holds all the legal rights as a legitimate NSA and not the BAP," Jorge said.

UNDER THE KNIFE
John Arigo won't be playing for the Alaska Aces anytime soon. The flashy marksman underwent arthroscopic surgery on his left knee at St. Luke's Medical Center last Wednesday. "Everything went well and it solved the pain on my knee," said Arigo of the operation performed by Dr. Raul Canlas. He is expected to miss 11 more games.

Row over cage venue for SEAG

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHERE do we hold the basketball event of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games?

LIM: Naga or Cebu

The Basketball Association of the Philippines wants to bring the event either to Naga City in Bicol or in Cebu City. But the Philsoc (SEAG organizing committee) wants it nowhere else but in Metro Manila.

BAP secretary general Graham Lim yesterday said the association is inclined to move the basketball event outside Metro Manila, which will also stage crowd-drawers like athletics and aquatics.

"They said the NSAs have the final say, so if we can have our way, we want it either in Naga City or Cebu City," said Lim.

Lim has talked with representatives from both cities and expressed satisfaction over the preparations made. He said they are willing to fulfill all the Philsoc requirements.

But while the NSAs can decide where their sport will be held, the Philsoc has excluded eight sports, including basketball, from the ruling.

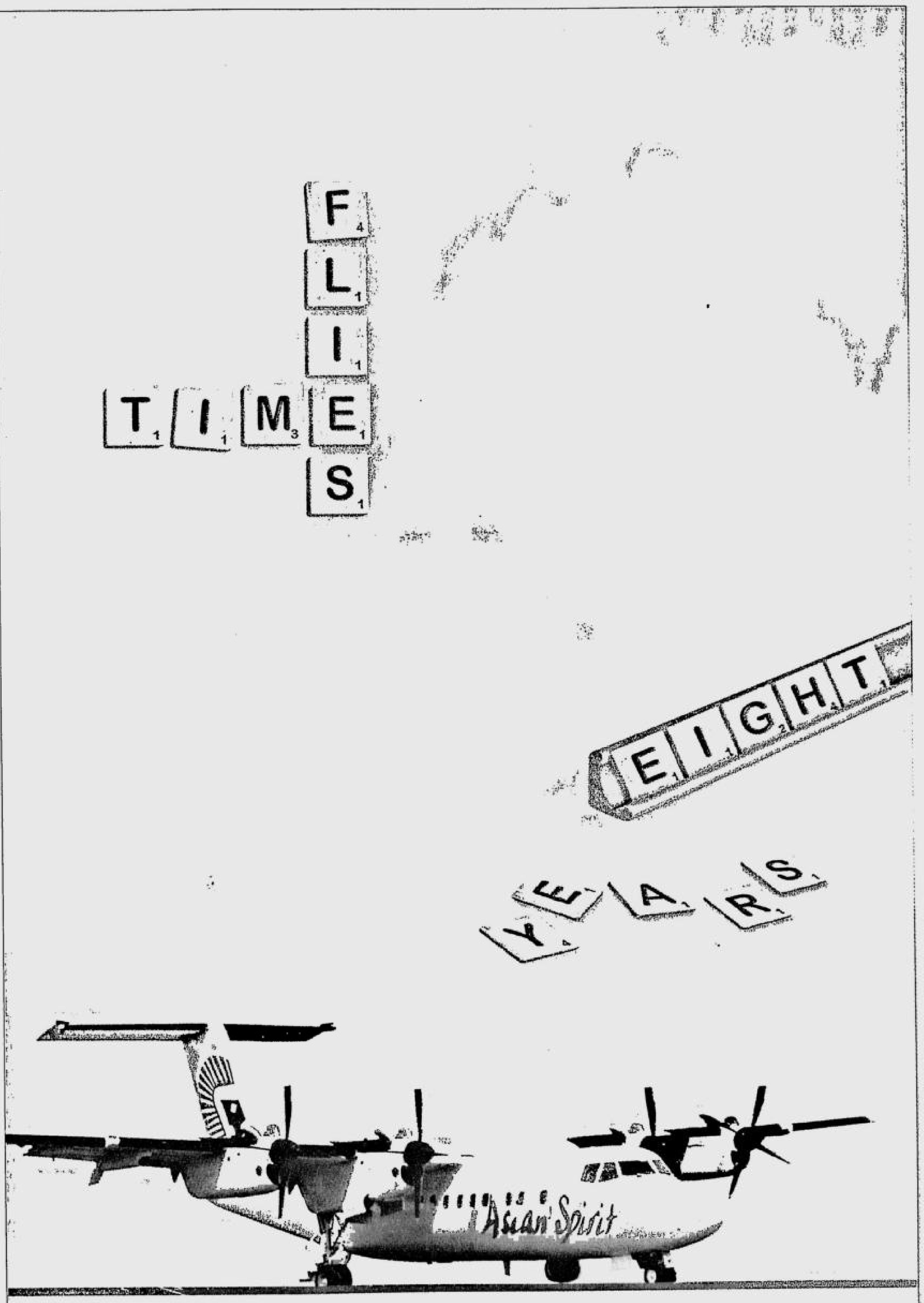
"Basketball, being the most popular sport in the country, must be held in Metro Manila," said Philsoc venues committee head Red Dumuk. "That's because of the logistics involved in basketball like television coverage and other training venue requirements."

POC spokesman Gus Villanueva added that Metro Manila can best accommodate the expected legions of fans going to the games when these are held at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

However, Naga City is set to unveil the 12,000-seat Rolando Andaya sports arena, while Cebu boasts of the Cebu City Coliseum that can accommodate as many as 15,000 fans. The Big Dome can hold at least 15,000.

Lobbyists from both Naga City and Cebu City argued that fans in their cities "carry the same passion for the sport and devotion for the national basketball team" as those in Metro Manila.

The Philsoc has also said aquatics, athletics, canoeing, gymnastics, rowing/traditional boat race, sailing and triathlon can only be staged in Metro Manila or in Subic.



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GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
2 p.m.—Welcoat vs BluStar
4 p.m.—Hapee vs Montaña

Hapee, Welcoat get going with revamped lineups

HAPEE Toothpaste, with its key players either moving to the PBA or another team, opens its title-retention bid today against Montaña Pawnshop in the PBL Unity Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Despite a revamped lineup, coach Junel Baculi is confident the Teeth Sparklers can regain the level of play his charges have shown in winning the past two conferences—Platinum Cup and 1st Unity Cup.

"We lost almost all our top players but I believe my new players will step up. And they are up to the task," said Baculi, who won the Unity Cup under the banner of Fash Liquid Detergent.

Platinum Cup MVP Peter June Simon, Allan Salangsang, Wesley Gonzales and Rich Alvarez left the team for the PBA in the pre-season, while LA Tenorio and Larry Fonacier hopped into the Lee Pipes-Ateneo roster.

Hapee will also get to test its newly acquired guard in Red Juntilla, a 6-foot-1 draftee from Cebu.

The new-look Jewelers will also miss a key player in their 4 p.m. game with the Teeth Sparklers after Gary David joined Coca-Cola in the PBA.

Welcoat Paints and BluStar Detergent clash in the first game at 2 p.m.

The Paint Masters were hardest hit by exodus to the PBA. They lost top players James Yap, Paul Artadi, Mark Pingris and Ervin Sotto and then their coach, Leo Austria, who was signed up to coach Shell last week.

Welcoat will have new reinforcements in former pros Marvin Ortiguerra and Chester Tolomia, who should provide ample help to resident gunner Jojo Tangkay.

On the other hand, the Detergent Kings have acquired 6-foot-3 Dondon Villamin from Sunkist-UST to help gangly slotman Nino Canaleta and burly forward Nurjanjam Alfad.

Marc Anthony Reyes

Aguilar puts on sizzling moto show

FLYING FINISH: Aguilar soars over the final hump en route to victory.

PUERTO PRINCESA—The country's best is still tops in the continent.

Revtex Rocket Glenn Aguilar put an exclamation point to this Sunday when he crossed the finish line of the 2004 FIM International Motocross Championships-Motocross Masters of Asia at the Puerto Princesa City Hall Sunday flashing the No. 1 sign to the collective roar of about 40,000 fans.

The 29-year-old defending champion quashed the challenge of Australia's Christian Horwood and Indonesia's Aep Dadang by dominating the morning and afternoon heats to rule the second leg of the FIM series, which had its first stop in Bali, Indonesia, last month.

The victory was worth 50 points for the seven-time National Rider of the Year. More importantly, he grabbed the FIM lead with an aggregate of 92 points, counting the 42 he garnered following a fighting second place finish in the Bali leg.

"The pressure was tremendous because the crowd was expecting me, as the champion, to do good here," said Aguilar, the first and only Filipino to have won Asia's most prestigious title. "But at the same time, they became my inspiration."

First-leg champion Tadakazu Otsuka of Japan, who was bugged by clutch problems, placed sixth in the race and now totes 78 points as second placer in the overall standings.

Otsuka is tied with Dadang, who finished third in both legs organized by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association.

Horwood moved up to fourth from seventh with 69 points while James Robinson of New Zealand leapt from 11th to fifth with 41 points while Thai Chaiyan Romphan is sixth overall with 36 points.

Aguilar went to work early in the first race, but Horwood overtook the Filipino in the 10th lap.

The RP champion, however, regained control in the 13th lap and slowly pulled away from Horwood and Dadang. At the end of the 16-lap race, Horwood was runner-up while Dadang settled for third. Thailand's Chaiyan and the Philippines' Popeye Rubi placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

Aguilar was even more impressive in the second race, pulling off a wire-to-wire victory over Horwood and Dadang.

"We should all be proud that Asia's best motocross rider is a Filipino," said Revtex team manager Ner Marquez Dormiendo.

SPORTSWATCH

Parica 2nd in Super Billiards Expo

JOHNNY Archer beat Filipino pool master Jose "Amang" Parica, 10-4, in the finals to win the top purse of $10,000 in the just concluded 12th annual Super Billiards Expo 9-Ball tour at the Valley Forge Convention Center, Pennsylvania, USA. The 35-year-old Archer took a 4-1 lead, upped it to 7-2 and was never really threatened by Parica, who started the Filipino pool invasion in the United States in the '80s. Although Archer missed a long cut on the 5 ball to allow Parica to get to 9-4, Archer broke and ran out the last rack to win the race-to-10 finals of the event also known as the Brunswick Men's Professional Players Championship. The California-based 54-year-old Parica received the runner-up prize of $5,000. Archer, the 2003 Player of the Year, defeated Jose Garcia, 10-5, and former world pool champion German Ralf Souquet, 10-6, respectively, in the one-loss side bracket to forge the title showdown against Parica, who came from the unbeaten side. *Marlon Bernardino*

Asian triathlon slated Saturday

TWO slots in the Athens Olympics are up for grabs in the Asian triathlon championships scheduled this Saturday at the Subic Bay Freeport in Olongapo. A field of 350 players from 12 countries, including eight entries from host Philippines, will vie for honors in the men's and women's elite open, the elite under-23 men's and women's category, and the elite junior boys and girls. Bannering the country in the Elite Open men's event are George Vilog, Noel Salvador, Mark Yamoyam, Cebu-based Eldy Banluta and Earl Rustia, while Ani Karina de Leon, Sandra Araullo and Mylene Jarina will lead the women's contingent. The Philippines has yet to produce a champion in the event ruled last year by world-ranked Daniel Sapunov of Kazakhstan in the men's elite open and Japan's woman champion Shizoka Kutsuna. *Trina Ibarle*

Checkmate summer clinics begin

THE FIRST of five series of Milo Checkmate summer chess clinics in Metro Manila begins today at six venues, namely: Robinsons Place in Fairview; Notre Dame of Greater Manila Area (NDGMA) in Grace Park, Caloocan City; St. Benedict Colege (SBC) in Alabang Hills; Jollibee in Greenhills Shopping Center (GSC); Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC) in Vito Cruz and J & F Divino Bldg. 967 A. Blvd., Quezon City. For details, call MCC at 826-8560 and 0916-8521069.

Sport climbing, fun competition

A COMBINED sport climbing clinic and fun competition awaits everyone at SM Sucat from April 2 to 4 at the mall's Center Atrium. Part of SM's Summer Sports at the SM Super Malls program, the indoor rock climbing event is being organized by Power Up Center to promote this adventure sports with Victorinox Original Swiss knives, Globe and JVC. "We will be offering climbing lessons that focus on balance, technique, and with vertical and horizontal movements with free trials offered at the venue," said Joey Cuerdo, project director. Registration fee for the clinic is P150 per participant and inquiries can be made with Ann Abrio at 932-7273.

7-cock derby eliminations begin

MORE than 50 matches have been lined up for the eliminations of the "National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby" today at the Araneta Coliseum. Hosts are NCA members Tony Tan, Tony Marfori and Pepito Ngo. Participants include Big Dome owner Jorge Araneta, Gov. Ito Ynares, Firefly Group, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Gerry Ramos, Eddie Araneta, Rep. Rudy Albano, Butch Macasaet, Biboy Enriquez, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Eric dela Rosa, Rep. Claude Bautista, Louie Cua, lawyer Ram Lopez, Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo, Alex Tang, Madlambayan Brothers, Jet and Joel Fernando, Jung Jingco and Escalona Brothers. Interested parties may contact 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Lancer Jr tennis championships

MAIN draw competitions in the 15th Mitsubishi Lancer International Juniors tennis championships unwrap today at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Thirty-two singles matches, 16 in both the boys' and girls' division, will usher in the tournament, categorized as a Group 1 championship by the International Tennis Federation. The top 16 seeds in both divisions will not see action today. The tournament was formally opened yesterday with Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and Mitsubishi Motors Philippines president and CEO Kengo Takase hitting the ceremonial serves.

LSGH basketball camp opens April 13

THE LSGH (La Salle Greenhills) Summer Basketball Camp kicks off on April 13 with beginner, intermediate and advance courses designed for age groups 7-9, 10-14 ad 9-15, respectively. All camp coaches are from the La Salle Greenhills basketball program which boasts two-year championship runs in the Prada midgets division and the Milo Small Basketeers of the Philippine National Finals. Registration fee is P1,900, inclusive of a reversible jersey. Interested parties may call 722-7717 and 721-2000 local 718.

TOUR COVERAGE
Chair Bert Lina and Gabby Lopez, ABS-CBN chairman, seal their partnership for the 2004 Tour Pilipinas. ABS-CBN, through Studio 23, will broadcast the Tour from April 15 to May 2. Looking on are Air21 president Lito Arvarez and ABS-CBN SVP Nick Gabunada.

Illogical logic

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IF THE reports are true, there are three bidders wishing to telecast the Olympic Games in the Philippines—NBN 4, Solar Sports and VDV Enterprises. The Olympiad is set for August this year in Athens, Greece.

Frankly, I don't give a damn.

Anyone can do anything he wants. Each to everyone's business, you know. This is a free world.

But of the three, however, I have some reservations when it comes to the bid of NBN 4.

You should, too, if I may suggest.

In fact, we can protest NBN 4's bid for the simple reason that NBN 4 is government. And because it's government, we must show our concern since we all are co-owners of it. Our taxes help sustain NBN 4.

Solar Sports and VDV Enterprises?

Oh, they can toss in all their money in trying to win their respective bids and I couldn't care less. It's their money, anyway.

But NBN 4?

Gosh, morally, it's not in a position to even try to make a bid. The outfit has been in the red for months now. How can it even possibly raise the millions of dollars needed to bring to our living rooms such a massive sports undertaking like the Olympics when NBN 4 can't even pay its employees' basic pay on time for sometime now?

Do you know that the employees' union there is up in arms and may yet stage a strike for all we know any minute now?

I don't know what logic the NBN 4 leadership is trying to foist on us when it filed its bid to cover the Athens Olympics.

I have one guess: Illogical logic.

Look, NBN 4 owes the International Olympic Committee (IOC) $1.2 million or thereabouts from its disastrous stint in the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Now, it was reported that NBN 4 is trying to restructure its debt to the IOC by way of a rider to ink a new deal for the Athens Olympiad coverage.

It looks enticing.

IOC may yet view the plan as hitting two birds with one stone: Collect at least for now half of the $1.2 million or maybe more that NBN 4 owes the IOC and then forge a new contract amounting to millions of dollars more pouring into the IOC coffers for NBN 4's coverage of the Athens Olympiad.

Sounds great, right?

But then, the question: Where will NBN 4 get the partial payment, if ever it pushes through at all? From Pagcor? From GMA's presidential campaign kitty?

Whichever, it'd still be people's money.

The government deficit has ran up to almost P8 billion already and here's NBN 4 trying to add up to the woes of FPJ, whom the surveys say will be the next tenant of Malacañang after the May 10 polls.

Such gall.

And to think NBN 4 has debts to the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) amounting to millions of pesos. I was told that even Commissioner Chino Trinidad of the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) has a hefty collectible from NBN 4. And isn't NBN 4 facing a lawsuit on impropriety and patent rites from the respected Bong Barrameda, the country's trivia king?

Solar Sports or VDV, fine with me. Their records speak for themselves.

Solar Sports, despite being relatively new in the game, has had several spectacular displays of coverage already like the NBA and Manny Pacquiao's destruction of Marco Antonio Barrera, to name only a few.

VDV? The people behind it are big shots in the sporting world. I was told their point man, who's been negotiating vigorously in Lausanne, Switzerland (IOC headquarters), for almost a year now, comes from a brilliant family steeped in reputation and sports intelligence.

Between the two, whoever wins it, I have no objection.

As to NBN 4, I am filing my objection to its bid effective this day for the reasons cited above—outstanding debts to the PBA et al.

***

FASTBREAK. It was such a thrill watching the fourth and final round live of The Players Championship on Dream Cable's Channel 49 won yesterday by 23-year-old Adam Scott. The next Dream Cable spectacular would be the Masters April 9-12. I can't wait to watch it.

Academic reward for top Eagles

By June Navarro

THE GRADUATES: (From left) Fonacier, Christian del Rosario, Membrere, Alvarez

RICH Alvarez added another feather in his cap when the Philippine Basketball Association's top rookie draftee this year picked up his diploma at the Ateneo de Manila University recently.

A product of Ateneo's basketball program, Alvarez received his BS Interdisciplinary Studies degree last Friday along with former Blue Eagle teammates Larry Fonacier and Magnum Membrere.

But their diplomas didn't come easy. As student-athletes, they had to strictly divide their time and effort playing and studying.

"The demands were mental, more than physical. I'm glad to get over it without encountering problems at all," said Alvarez, now with the Shell Turbochargers.

Alvarez, who won back-to-back UAAP MVPs (2000-2001) before helping the Blue Eagles capture their first UAAP crown (2002) after 15 years, can now concentrate on honing his skills with the Turbochargers.

But being a computer whiz, Alvarez said he would later pursue a course in computer science.

"I love computers but it has to take the back seat. For now, I have to get better every game to improve my craft," he added.

In contrast, Membrere is hell-bent on immediately taking up a Master's degree in his final two years with the Blue Eagles in the UAAP.

"A Master's degree in communication will do," said the 21-year-old Membrere, a dean's lister in his junior year.

"Studying at the Ateneo for four years was like trying to squeeze yourself through the hole of a needle everyday," he added.

Membrere missed the entire 2002 UAAP season due to an injured right knee.

He strained the same knee in the UAAP Finals against FEU last year but the sweet-shooting 6-foot guard has recovered enough to be installed as one of the go-to guys for Lee Pipes-Ateneo in the ongoing PBL Unity Cup.

The 6-foot-3 Fonacier also wants to take a Master's degree in his last year with the Eagles.

And like Membrere, Fonacier hopes to join former teammates Enrico Villanueva, Wesley Gonzales, Jec Chia and Alvarez in the PBA as distinguished products of Ateneo's comprehensive basketball program.

Teenager boots out Federer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida—Roger Federer could only watch 17-year-old Rafael Nadal celebrate.

As the Spaniard closed in on an upset, he flexed his biceps following one point and leaped behind the baseline after another. And when Nadal put away a volley to complete the biggest victory of his young life, he danced and punched the air.

With a brilliant variety of shotmaking, the big-swinging left-hander from Mallorca beat the top-ranked Federer of Switzerland, 6-3, 6-3, in the third round of the Nasdaq-100 Open.

Federer, the reigning Wimbledon and Australian Open champion, lost for only the second time in 25 matches this year.

In women's play, top-seeded Serena Williams of the United States cleared another hurdle in her comeback from an eight-month layoff by beating Russian Elena Likhovtseva, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

Williams' path to the final became easier when fourth-seeded Jennifer Capriati of the United States lost to No. 25 Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, 6-2, 6-4.

Williams' next opponent will be 16-year-old Russian Maria Sharapova, who beat No. 13 Anna Smashnova-Pistolesi of Israel, 7-5, 6-2.

Three-time champion Venus Williams struggled early but played a flawless tiebreaker and beat No. 27 Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia, 7-6 (0), 6-2.

In other men's play, former No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt of Australia lost to Andrei Pavel of Romania, 6-4, 7-5. Hewitt had 10 double-faults, including three in the final game. *AP*

NADAL: Brilliant shot making. AP

Park holds off Song, bags 1st major title

RANCHO MIRAGE, California—Grace Park calmly stroked in a 6-footer for birdie on the 18th hole to hold off 17-year-old Aree Song and win her first major title in the Kraft Nabisco Championship.

Park's putt came just moments after Song rolled in a 30-foot eagle putt Sunday to tie Park for the lead, pumping her fist in the air and shouting "Yes! Yes! Yes!"

Park backed off her putt twice, then knocked it in the center of the hole to win the tournament she so coveted.

"I did it. I'm shaking like a baby," Park said.

Song's final hole theatrics came on a hole shortened to 485 yards on Sunday so players could take a chance and go for the green in two. She did, hitting a fairway wood on, then made the putt as Park looked on.

If Park had missed, the two were heading for a playoff. But there was never any doubt from the moment the ball left the putter until it rolled gently in the cup to finish off a final-round 69.

Song said she expected nothing else.

"I wasn't really disappointed when it went in because I felt like I couldn't have done anymore," Song said.

Both Song and 14-year-old Michelle Wie did nothing to diminish their status as stars of the future. Song ended up with a 2-under 70 in final-round pressure, while Wie shot a 71 to finish four shots back in fourth place. Wie, though, was never really in contention after Park took command with four birdies in a row beginning at the ninth hole.

Karrie Webb closed with a 69 to finish third, two strokes back.

Park, a 25-year-old in her fifth year on tour, vowed after tying for the lead in the third round that this was her time to win her first major championship. She came close last year, losing in a playoff to Annika Sorenstam in the LPGA Championship.

With Sorenstam not a factor on the weekend, Park still had plenty to worry about. There were the two teen phenoms and Webb, whose 29 LPGA wins include six major championships.

Park started slowly, making bogey on the third hole, and was two shots back of Song when she stood on the ninth fairway with a wedge in her hand. She hit the shot within 3 feet, made the putt and was off and running on a birdie binge.

Park birdied the next three holes to open up a two-shot lead and appeared ready to take command of the tournament. *AP*

PARK jumps into the water bordering the 18th green after defeating Song. REUTERS

Georgia, Duke gain Final Four

ST. LOUIS—Even if it takes a little something extra, Georgia Tech finds a way to get it done.

And the Yellow Jackets got a sweet reward for their perseverance: their second trip to college basketball's Final Four and their first since 1990.

Jarrett Jack scored a career-high 29 points to lift the Yellow Jackets to a 79-71 victory over Kansas in overtime of the St. Louis Regional championship Sunday.

In Atlanta, the Duke Blue Devils ended Xavier's remarkable run in the NCAA tournament and headed to their 14th Final Four, holding off the Musketeers, 66-63, to win the Atlanta Regional. *AP*

NBA results: Memphis 94, Toronto 88; Dallas 118, Orlando 88; Houston 111, Milwaukee 107 (ot); Boston 89, Philadelphia 65; Indiana 87, Miami 80; Sacramento 100, Washington 92; Golden State 105, LA Clippers 77; LA Lakers 91, Utah 84. *AP*

With Shark in mind, Scott captures TPC

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Florida—Adam Scott was on the verge of going from champion to choke artist, his face awash in disbelief after pulling a 6-iron into the water on the final hole with a two-shot lead.

Scott couldn't help but think of his idol, Greg Norman.

Not because of the shot he had just hit, but the crucial chip he was about to play.

Relying on a short-game lesson he got from the Shark on the eve of The Players Championship, the 23-year-old Aussie made it pay off just in time Sunday, hitting a delicate pitch to 10 feet and making the bogey putt to become the youngest champion in golf's richest tournament.

"I probably would have lost the tournament if I was chipping the same way I did earlier in the week," Scott said. "I owe Greg a beer."

The 10-footer was true as soon as it left his putter, and Scott thrust his fist into the air twice, then threw his cap down in relief. He closed with a 2-under 70 and won $1.44 million from the $8 million purse.

Padraig Harrington shot a 30 on the back nine of the TPC at Sawgrass, tying the nine-hole tournament record, and closed with a 66 that suddenly looked like it might be enough to get into a playoff.

Scott finished at 12-under 276, and his perks include a five-year exemption on the PGA Tour and a three-year exemption to the Masters.

Kenny Perry and Phil Mickelson each closed with a 71, and Frank Lickliter had a 72 to tie for third at 280.

Tiger Woods was unable to mount a last-day challenge and finished tied for 16th on 285 following a one-over 73

The other big winner Sunday was John Daly. Despite closing with an 80 to finish near the bottom of the pack, he got into the Masters by finishing in the top 10 on the PGA Tour money list. *AP*

SCOTT pumps his fist in victory. AP

JUNGOLF TOUR

Ardina pulls away; Superals up

CANLUBANG—Former world champion Dottie Ardina pulled away early from her rivals with a seven-over-par 79 yesterday in girls' Class D even as the three Superals—Wolen, Crystal and Princess—stormed ahead in their respective divisions at the start of the 2004 Philippine Junior Golf Tour at the north course of the Canlubang Golf and Country Club here.

The 10-year-old Ardina, playing in her home course, finished the day nine strokes ahead of Ma-an Legaspi, who had an 88, with Kristina Potenciano another four strokes back in third place at 92.

The Superals likewise had a mighty start in the event kicking off a nationwide tour supported by Samsung Electronics, DHL Philippines, Philippine Airlines and sports patron Ricky Razon of International Container Terminal Services Inc.

Wolen fired a 75 to lead by nine strokes over Bermuda-based Joshua Cabrera in boys' Class C while his elder sister Crystal moved on top by two over Bambi dela Paz in girls' Class B . Not to be outdone, their youngest sister, Princess, opened up a nine-shot spread over Feliciano Medalla in girls' Class E.

Also at the Riviera executive course, JR Gonzales shot a five-over 59 for a two-shot lead over AR Ramos with Miggy Yee in third place after a 64 in boys' Class C.

Don Martin Fernandez and Bino dela Paz shared the boys' Class D lead with similar 84s, two better than the 86 of the fancied Miguel Tabuena while Regine de Guzman and Cyna Rodriguez were the joint leaders in girls' Class C.

WOLEN Superal

Spring trips AdU, ends title drought

SPRING Cooking Oil-San Pablo capped its dominance over Manila-Adamson University by posting an 80-73 victory Sunday to rule the Panasonic Cup-7 Lakes invitational basketball title and end a long title drought at the Aquino gym in San Pablo City.

The 7 Lakers of Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Mayor Florante "Boy" Aquino scored six consecutive points to wiggle out of a 66-66 tie and lead for good, 72-66, with 3:53 remaining.

"It feels good to win the title in front of the home crowd," said Spring-SP coach Mike Buendia.

Rodel Manuel, who was eventually named MVP of the tourney sponsored by Sulpicio Lines and hosted by Mayor Aquino, led Spring-SP with 21 points.

UA-Pampanga's Pelicans whipped Sulpicio Lines-Cagayan de Oro, 96-80, in the other game to finish third.

Spring-SP's Robin Mendoza, Adamson's Mark Abadia and Ken Bono as well as Pampanga's Dave Bautista joined Manuel in the Mythical Five.

In the side events, CDO's Jester Adams won the one-on-one contest, Spring-SP's Jonathan Serrano emerged 3-point king and Pampanga's Alex Bognot bagged the slam dunk title.

Scores:

First game:

PAMPANGA 96—Bautista 13, Liangco 13, Sierra 10, Bansil 9, Ruiz 7, Mejia 7, Yambao 5, Garcia 5, Magpayo 5, Alberto 4, Duyag 2, Mendoza 2, Valerio 1.

CDO 80—Reyes 22, Navales 14, Tagarda15, Alfecha 9, Adams 8, Pong 5, Casino 4, Tilad 3.

Quarters: 28-25, 45-41, 75-57, 96-80.

Second game:

SPRING-SP 80—Manuel 21, Kalaw 14, Reyes 13, Mendoza 9, Yee 8, Caceres 6, Corbin 6, Serrano 4, Taguines 3.

ADAMSON 73—Abadia 27, hate 11, Bono 6, Hugnatan 6, Poloyapoy 5, Gandarosa 4, Tiongco 3, Cabahug 3, Tajonera 2, Capati 2.

Quarters: 17-19, 39-35, 60-56, 80-73.

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4 50 FIRST DATES
5 WISE GIRLS
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7 THE GRUDGE 2
8 DEATH CURSE
9 OTSO-OTSO
10 HIDALGO
11 HIGHWAYMEN
12 KARIBAL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
6350749

1 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 DEATH CURSE
3 TORQUE
4 HIGHWAYMEN
5 THE GRUDGE 2
6 HIDALGO
7 OTSO-OTSO
8 SCOOBY DOO 2
9 50 FIRST DATES
10 THE CURSE
11 GOTHIKA
12 KARIBAL

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
3 WISE GIRLS
4 50 FIRST DATES
5 SCOOBY DOO 2
6 HIDALGO
7 KARIBAL
8 DEATH CURSE
9 OTSO-OTSO
10 TORQUE
11 HIGHWAYMEN
12 THE CURSE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 KARIBAL
2 SCOOBY DOO 2
3 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
4 THE GRUDGE 2
5 OTSO-OTSO
6 HIDALGO
7 50 FIRST DATES
8 HIGHWAYMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

1 OTSO-OTSO
2 THE GRUDGE 2
3 50 FIRST DATES
4 DUDA/DOUBT
5 SCOOBY DOO 2
6 THE CURSE
7 HIGHWAYMEN
8 HIDALGO
9 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
10 KARIBAL

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 SCOOBY DOO 2
2 HIGHWAYMEN
3 OTSO-OTSO
4 KARIBAL

North

SM CITY MARILAO
(044) 933 2013 to 17

1 HIDALGO
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
3 OTSO-OTSO
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 SCOOBY DOO 2
2 TORQUE
3 LOVE ACTUALLY
4 LANGIT MO, KALIGAYAHAN KO
5 THE GRUDGE 2
6 OTSO-OTSO

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464505

1 HIDALGO
2 IN THE CUT
3 OTSO-OTSO
4 SCOOBY DOO 2

South

SM CITY LAS PIÑAS
8066888

1 RING: THE SPIRAL
2 SCOOBY DOO 2
3 DEATH CURSE
4 50 FIRST DATES
5 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
6 HIDALGO
7 OTSO-OTSO
8 HIGHWAYMEN
9 THE GRUDGE 2
10 KARIBAL

SM CITY BICUTAN
7763655

1 SCOOBY DOO 2
2 OTSO-OTSO
3 50 FIRST DATES
4 HIGHWAYMEN

SM SUPER CENTER SUCAT
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1 HIGHWAYMEN
2 SCOOBY DOO 2
3 OTSO-OTSO
4 KARIBAL

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1 DEATH CURSE
2 SCOOBY DOO 2
3 HIDALGO
4 THE GRUDGE 2
5 50 FIRST DATES
6 OTSO-OTSO
7 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
8 KARIBAL

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1 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
2 GOTHIKA
3 DRAGON VS. NINJA
4 OTSO-OTSO

Visayas & Mindanao

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1 LION KING MUSICAL
2 HIDALGO
3 SCOOBY DOO 2
4 NIGHTMARE
5 BONE SNATCHER
6 GOTHIKA
7 OTSO-OTSO
8 TORQUE

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1 WATER DEMON
2 RESERVED
3 SCOOBY DOO 2
4 DUPLEX
5 GOTHIKA
6 OTSO-OTSO
7 RESERVED
8 TOTALLY BLONDE

SM CITY DAVAO
(082) 2976998

1 HIDALGO
2 WATER DEMON
3 OTSO-OTSO
4 GOTHIKA
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
6 SCOOBY DOO 2

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(088) 8592884

1 WISHING STAIRS
2 OTSO-OTSO
3 GOTHIKA
4 TORQUE

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1
SCOOBY DOO 2
11:50 FS/12:20 MFS/
2:25/4:30/6:35/8:40
10:15 LFS/10:45
LMS/12:15 END

2
50 FIRST DATES
11:50 FS/12:20 MFS/
2:25/4:30/6:35/8:40/
10:20 LFS / 10:45 LMS/
12:20 END

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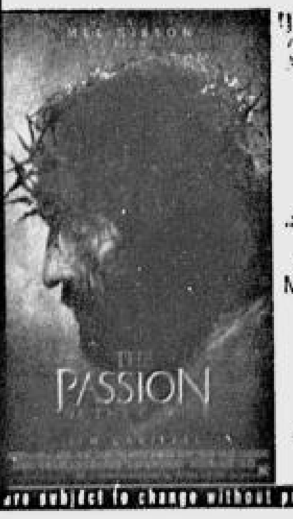

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1 HIGHWAYMEN	1 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT	ArtFilm 1 HIGHWAYMEN 1:45 3:45 5:45 7:45 9:45	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 50 FIRST DATES 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00 11:00	THX 1 SCOOBY DOO 2
2 SCOOBY DOO 2	2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN	2 SCOOBY DOO 2 12:15 2:15 4:15 6:15 8:15	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 SCOOBY DOO 2 1:15 3:15 5:15 7:15 9:15 11:15	2 HIGHWAYMEN
3 OTSO-OTSO	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 50 FIRST DATES 12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30	Onstage REPERTORY'S DRACULA Apr 2, 3 & 4	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE MISSING 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00 11:30	3 50 FIRST DATES
4 50 FIRST DATES	4 WISEGIRLS		4 LOVE ACTUALLY 1:05 3:30 5:55 8:20 10:45	4 LOVE ACTUALLY
	5 HIGHWAYMEN		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 HIGHWAYMEN 1:10 3:10 5:10 7:10 9:10 11:10	5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
	6 SCOOBY DOO 2			
	7 THE MISSING			

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2 (SDDS) SCOOBY DOO-2
3 (DTS) SPIRAL
4 GOLD (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2
5 GOLD (DOLBY) HIGHWAYMEN
6 GOLD (SDDS) HIDALGO
7 GOLD (DOLBY) 50 FIRST DATES
8 [illegible] OTSO OTSO
9 [illegible] DEATH CURSE
10 [illegible] GRUDGE-2

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2 (DOLBY) SCOOBY DOO-2
3 (DOLBY) 50 FIRST DATE
4 (DOLBY) HIGHWAY MEN

Masagana CINEMA
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1 OTSO OTSO
2 SCOOBY DOO-2
3 KARIBAL

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(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 OTSO OTSO
SCOOBY DOO-2
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) KARIBAL
5

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 PEEP SHOW
2 KARIBAL
3 HIGHWAY MEN
4 OTSO OTSO
5 SCOOBY DOO-2
6 THE CURSE

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1 DRAGON VS NINJA
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

PREMIERE CINEMA
(Makati City) tel 892.2503 THX

SCOOBY DOO-2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 OTSO OTSO
2 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 KAMANDAG
2 BLOODY WISH
3
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

RESERVE
5
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 KARIBAL
2 OTSO OTSO
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 (SDDS) SORUM
5 HIDALGO
6 (DOLBY) BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
7 (DTS) THE CURSE
8 U-BELT
9 PEEP SHOW

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 RESERVE
2 (SDDS)
3 (DTS)
4 (DOLBY)
5

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 TORQUE
2 OTSO OTSO
3 (DTS) MR NICE GUY
4 KARIBAL
5 [illegible] SCOOBY DOO-2

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson KARIBAL
Lords KARIBAL

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 HIGHWAY MEN
2 OTSO OTSO
3 KARIBAL
4 SCOOBY DOO 2

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) HIGHWAY MEN
2 SCOOBY DOO 2
3 KARIBAL
4 OTSO OTSO
5 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 KARIBAL
2 SCOOBY DOO-2

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
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2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) HIGHWAY MEN
4 (SDDS) SCOOBY DOO-2
5 (DTS) 50 FIRST DATE
6 THE CURSE
7 OTSO OTSO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) SKY OF LOVE
2 OTSO OTSO
3 (DTS EX) SCOOBY DOO-2
4 HAUNTED OFFICE

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 OTSO OTSO
2 DUPLEX
3 (DOLBY) TORQUE
4 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 OTSO OTSO
2 SPIRAL
3 (DOLBY) GOTHIKA
4 (DTS) TORQUE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1 OTSO OTSO
2 BONE SNATCHER
3 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 OTSO OTSO
2 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2
3 (DOLBY) 50 FIRST DATES
4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 OTSO OTSO
2 (DOLBY) BONE SNACTHER
3 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2
4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
2 GOTHIKA
3 (DOLBY) OTSO OTSO

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 OTSO OTSO
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
3 (DOLBY) GHOST HOUSE
4 (DTS) TORQUE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 OTSO OTSO
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) DOUBLE SEEDUCTION
2 SAKIM SA PAG-IBIG
3 PEEP SHOW
4 (DTS) THE PHONE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) I AM DINA
2 PEEP SHOW
3 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2
4 SORUM
5 OTSO OTSO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 OTSO OTSO
2 SCOOBY DOO-2

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 SCOOBY DOO-2
2 OTSO OTSO
3 PEEP SHOW

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 DUPLEX
2 GOTHIKA
3 (DTS) TORQUE
4 (DOLBY) OTSO OTSO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS) RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 LANGIT KO KALIGAYAHAN KO
2 THE CURSE
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 OTSO OTSO

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 LANGIT KO KALIGAYAHAN KO
2 OTSO OTSO

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ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
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Filinvest - Alabang
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SCOOBY-DOO 2 MONSTERS UNLEASHED
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How to do well . . .

From page A25

what you feel you can't do. Trust the audition master and his comments because, in most cases, he's just trying to see what more, what *else* you can do.

In any case, if he does conclude that you're good enough to cast in his production, he won't make you do anything that you'll be bad at. After all, he has to protect his production, *not* your limited or biased perception of yourself.

Also, don't second-guess the audition master. Don't give him what you *think* he's looking for, because in quite a number of instances, he doesn't have a clear idea of what that is!

He's simply sizing up your talents, and then he'll try to figure out which particular role would be best served by them.

A final note on nervousness: Don't fight it, it's natural to be keyed up when you're trying to convince a stranger that you're talented. But don't get all hung up over feeling inadequate, either.

Leave the judging to the judge—just give him your best and most natural performance to evaluate. —And, break a leg (That's theater talk for—good luck!)

'Taking Lives'

ANGELINA Jolie costars with **Ethan Hawke**, **Kiefer Sutherland** and **Olivier Martinez** in the suspence-thriller "Taking Lives." She plays an FBI profiler who is brought in to help solve a series of murders in Canada. Her unorthodox sleuthing methods alienate her from the local members of their investigative team, who are daunted by her uncanny abilities.

Jolie agreed to play the role because the FBI profiler isn't just a cool, tough professional, but is also vulnerable. As she learns more about the cunning, chameleon-like killer, she becomes more of a target for an attack by him.

Making her even more vulnerable is the script's strong hints at flaws in her character, and secrets in her past.

'Dreamsounds'

UNIVERSAL Music Philippines' new CD, "Dreamlands," features soft rhythms and soothing versions of recent R&B hits: "Because of You" by **Keith Martin**, "Home" by **Brian McKnight**, "Make Me Whole" by **Amel Larrieux**, "For You" by **Kenny Lattimore**, and "If You're Not the One" by **Daniel Bedingfield**.

Completing the UMP-Wave 89.1 compilation are "Don't Change" by Musique, "I Won't Cry" by Profyle, "Negative Things" by Selwyn, "All My Love" by Inner Voices, "I'll Wait Right Here" by Jersey Ave., "Something to See" by **Glenn Lewis**, and "You First Believed" by Hoku.

Bocelli Manila concert ‘a test of patience’

From page A26

singing “opera, pop, Italian tunes and a little bit of everything.”

Bocelli will not sing alone, said Bianchi. He will be performing with Italian soprano Maria Luigia Borsi. They are expected to sing the duets “Time To Say Goodbye,” which Bocelli originally recorded with Sarah Brightman, and “The Prayer,” the tenor’s duet with Celine Dion.

90-piece Pinoy orchestra

A 90-piece all-Filipino orchestra with Maestro Marcello Rota as conductor will accompany Bocelli and Borsi.

“This is the same orchestra that played with Luciano Pavarotti in Manila in 1994,” Arenas explained. “Pavarotti was so overwhelmed with the way the group performed that he even asked it to accompany him in his other performances.”

Arenas said the biggest challenge in mounting Bocelli’s one-night show was to convince the tenor to come to Asia.

“We’ve been trying to close this deal for years. But sadly, war in the middle east broke out in 1991, then came the SARS outbreak and the terrorist attacks in Mindanao,” she explained.

“I’m just excited that now, Bocelli, the greatest tenor in the world, would be coming over and would be watched by 85 million Filipinos.”

Arenas said tickets are priced at P500, P2,000, P3,000, P5,000 P10,000 and P15,000.

No latecomers

“We are selling tickets this cheap so everybody can watch,” she pointed out. “Its very *pang-masa*. We will also buy a big bulk of the tickets for the less fortunate who are gifted with musical talent. They will get to see the great tenor perform live.”

The “Andrea Bocelli Live in Manila” show begins at 8 p.m. The audience is expected to be seated at 7:30 p.m.

“That’s part of the contract,” Arenas added. “Latecomers will not be allowed to enter while the show is ongoing.”

Andrea Bocelli (“Andrea” is Italian for “Andrew”), 45, has been playing the organ in his parish at age 6. At 12, he figured in an accident while watching a soccer game, which cost him his eyesight.

BLIND tenor Bocelli will finally perform in Manila. Thanks to the patience of local producer Arenas, who agreed to all conditions Bocelli’s Italian promoters had stipulated in their contract.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Ali 3	HIGHWAYMEN
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Ali 5	50 FIRST DATES
Ali 6	KARIBAL
Ali 7	OTSO-OTSO

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APR 10	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (2PM)
APR 11	PBA: FED EX VS. RED BULL
APR 13	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 14	PBA PUREFOODS VS. RED BULL

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
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ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KARIBAL
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KARIBAL
B	LIBERATED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

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STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	KARIBAL
CINEMA-3	BUTTERFLY EFFECT
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HIDALGO
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	CURSE
CINEMA-6	PEEP SHOW
CINEMA-7	TORQUE
CINEMA-8	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SCOOBY DOO 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HIGHWAYMEN
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	50 FIRST DATES
CINEMA-12	GRUDGE 2
CINEMA-14	GHOSTFIGHTER (R)
CINEMA-15	OTSO OTSO

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	TORQUE
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	GOTHIKA
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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1	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN	11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	GP
2	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:55, 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 9:55	GP
3	50 FIRST DATES	11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20	PG-13
4	HIGHWAYMEN	11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20	R-13

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

WISE GIRLS R18 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	SCOOBY DOO 2 GP 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00	SCOOBY DOO 2 GP 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25
HIGHWAYMEN R13 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20	LOVE ACTUALLY R18 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40	50 FIRST DATES PG13 12:15, 2:10, 4:15, 6:10, 8:15, 10:20

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GP

CINEMA 2
50 FIRST DATES
11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00
P13

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NOW SHOWING

GALLERIA 632-9115 to 16 / 687-0593

CINEMA 1 THX	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
2	50 FIRST DATES	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
3	BUTTERFLY EFFECT	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:30
4	HIGHWAYMEN	12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30
5	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00
6	THE GRUDGE 2	12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30
7	OTSO-OTSO	12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
8	WISE GIRLS	11:05, 1:15, 3:25, 5:35, 7:45, 9:55
9	LOVE ACTUALLY	10:40, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40
10	DEATH CURSE	12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P130 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

1	SCOOBY DOO 2	10:15, 12:10, 2:05, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:50
2	THE GRUDGE 2	11:55, 2:00, 4:05, 6:10, 8:15, 10:00
3	WISE GIRLS	11:55, 2:00, 4:05, 6:10, 8:15, 10:00
4	DEATH CURSE	10:20, 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:00
5	OTSO-OTSO	10:10, 12:35, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
6	HIGHWAYMEN	10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:35, 10:00
7	50 FIRST DATES	10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1	HIGHWAYMEN	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2	50 FIRST DATES	11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10
3	KARIBAL	11:50, 1:40, 3:30, 5:20, 7:10, 9:00
4	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40
5	SCOOBY DOO 2	10:50, 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30
6	THE GRUDGE 2	10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:40
7	BUTTERFLY EFFECT	11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00
8	OTSO-OTSO	11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31

1	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35
2	OTSO-OTSO	11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30
3	BUTTERFLY EFFECT	12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:00
4	THE CURSE	11:50, 1:45, 3:40, 5:35, 7:30, 9:00
5	HIGHWAYMEN	11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35
6	THE GRUDGE 2	11:40, 1:45, 3:50, 5:55, 8:10
7	50 FIRST DATES	11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30
8	THE NIGHTMARE	11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:3

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575

1	WISHING STAIRS
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	KARIBAL

big Supercenter CAINTA 240-4661

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	KARIBAL
4	50 FIRST DATES

Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA Laguna (049)837-0907

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	BONE SNATCHER
3	OTSO-OTSO
4	50 FIRST DATES
5	LOVE ACTUALLY

Big R Supercenter LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870

1	CARMEN
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	LANGIT MO KALIGAYAHAN KO
4	THE CURSE
5	SCOOBY DOO 2

Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS 852-2125

1	OTSO-OTSO
2	LOVE ACTUALLY
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	THE GRUDGE 2
5	CARMEN

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS 875-1927 / 961-5270

1	LOVE ACTUALLY
2	LANGIT MO KALIGAYAHAN KO
3	OTSO-OTSO
4	THE GRUDGE 2
5	SCOOBY DOO 2
6	TORQUE

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	50 FIRST DATES
3	KARIBAL
4	DEATH CURSE
5	OTSO-OTSO
6	THE GRUDGE 2

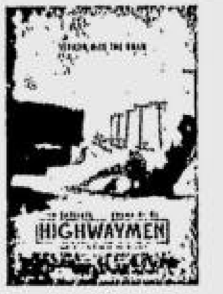
BACOLOD 441-0458/59

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	GOTHIKA
3	OTSO-OTSO
4	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
5	CARMEN
6	DRAGON VS. NINJA

ILOILO 336-8070/78

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	DUPLEX
3	OTSO-OTSO
4	WATER DEMON
5	TOTALLY BLONDE
6	GOTHIKA

See it at its BEST



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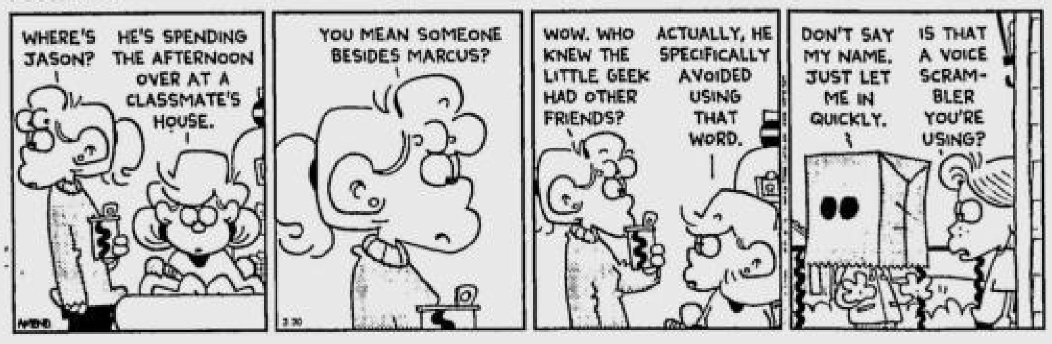
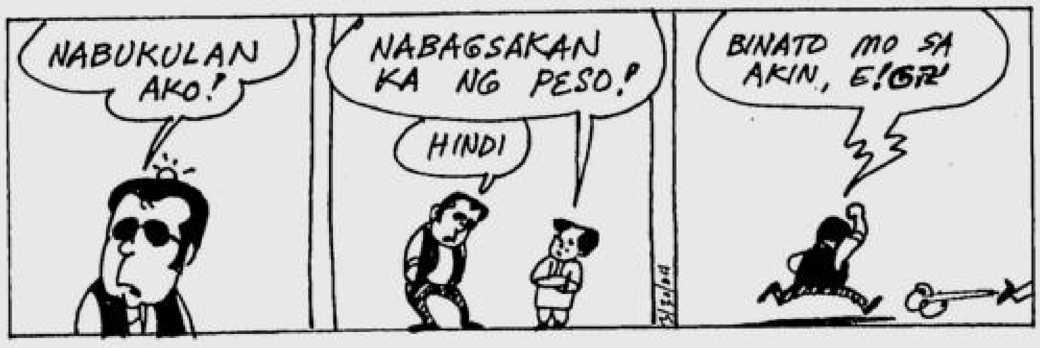
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHERE'S JASON?
HE'S SPENDING THE AFTERNOON OVER AT A CLASSMATE'S HOUSE.
YOU MEAN SOMEONE BESIDES MARCUS?
WOW. WHO KNEW THE LITTLE GEEK HAD OTHER FRIENDS?
ACTUALLY, HE SPECIFICALLY AVOIDED USING THAT WORD.
DON'T SAY MY NAME. JUST LET ME IN QUICKLY.
IS THAT A VOICE SCRAMBLER YOU'RE USING?
AMEND
3-30

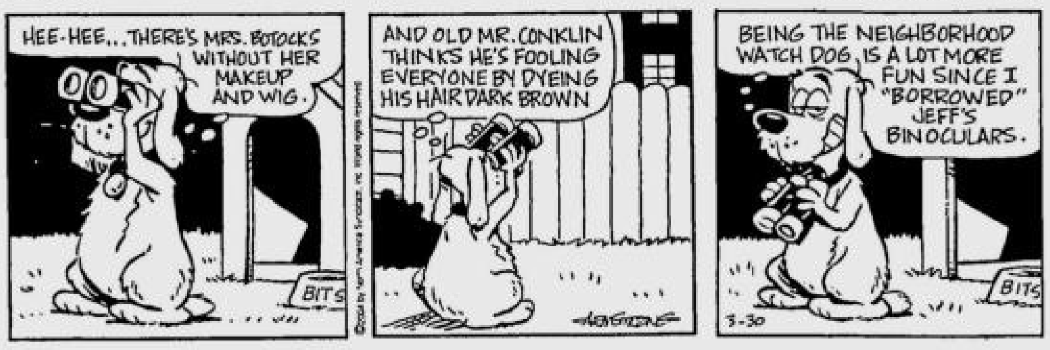
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NABUKULAN AKO!
NABAGSAKAN KA NG PESO?
HINDI
BINATO MO SA AKIN, E!GR

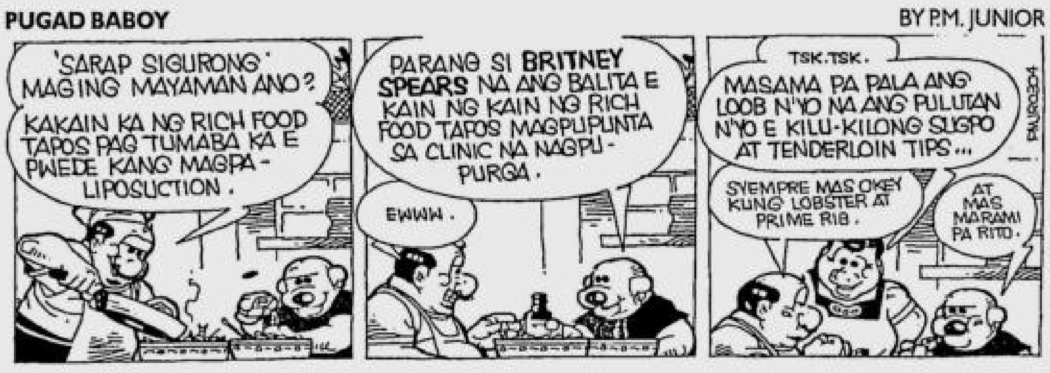
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HEE-HEE... THERE'S MRS. BOTOCKS WITHOUT HER MAKEUP AND WIG.
BITS
AND OLD MR. CONKLIN THINKS HE'S FOOLING EVERYONE BY DYEING HIS HAIR DARK BROWN
BEING THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH DOG IS A LOT MORE FUN SINCE I "BORROWED" JEFF'S BINOCULARS.
BITS
3-30

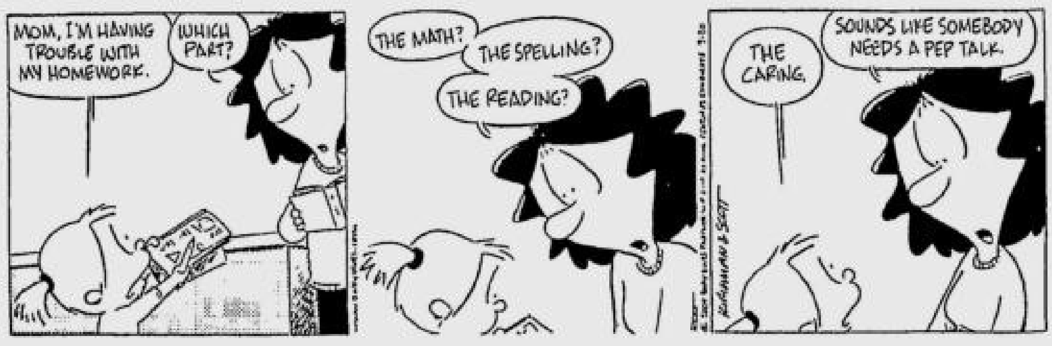
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'SARAP SIGURONG' MAGING MAYAMAN ANO?
KAKAIN KA NG RICH FOOD TAPOS PAG TUMABA KA E PWEDE KANG MAGPA-LIPOSUCTION.
PARANG SI BRITNEY SPEARS NA ANG BALITA E KAIN NG KAIN NG RICH FOOD TAPOS MAGPUPUNTA SA CLINIC NA NAGPU-PURGA.
EWWW.
TSK.TSK.
MASAMA PA PALA ANG LOOB N'YO NA ANG PULUTAN N'YO E KILU-KILONG SUGPO AT TENDERLOIN TIPS...
SYEMPRE MAS OKEY KUNG LOBSTER AT PRIME RIB.
AT MAS MARAMI PA RITO.
PMJR0304

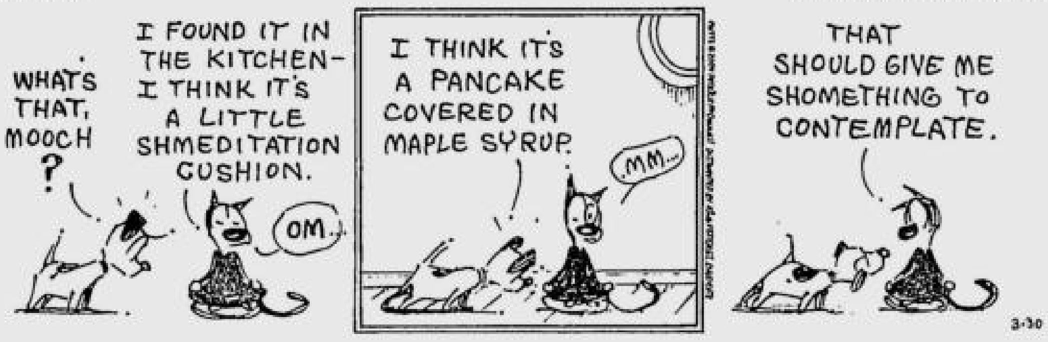
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM, I'M HAVING TROUBLE WITH MY HOMEWORK.
WHICH PART?
THE MATH?
THE SPELLING?
THE READING?
THE CARING.
SOUNDS LIKE SOMEBODY NEEDS A PEP TALK.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

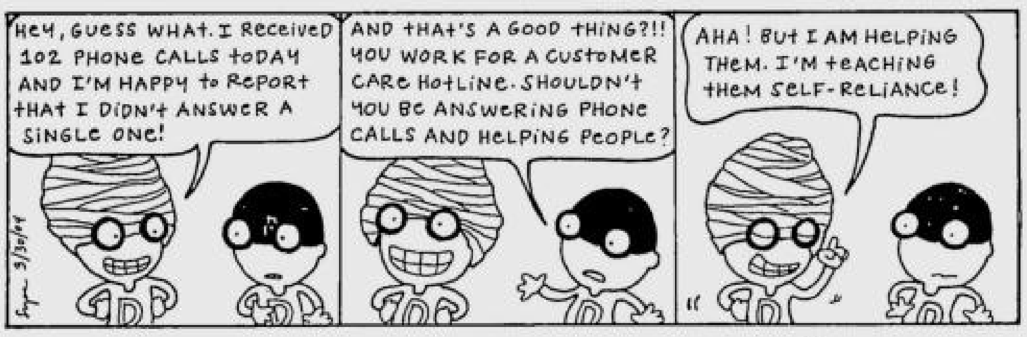
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S THAT, MOOCH ?
I FOUND IT IN THE KITCHEN- I THINK IT'S A LITTLE SHMEDITATION CUSHION.
OM..
I THINK IT'S A PANCAKE COVERED IN MAPLE SYRUP.
MM...
THAT SHOULD GIVE ME SHOMETHING TO CONTEMPLATE.
3-30

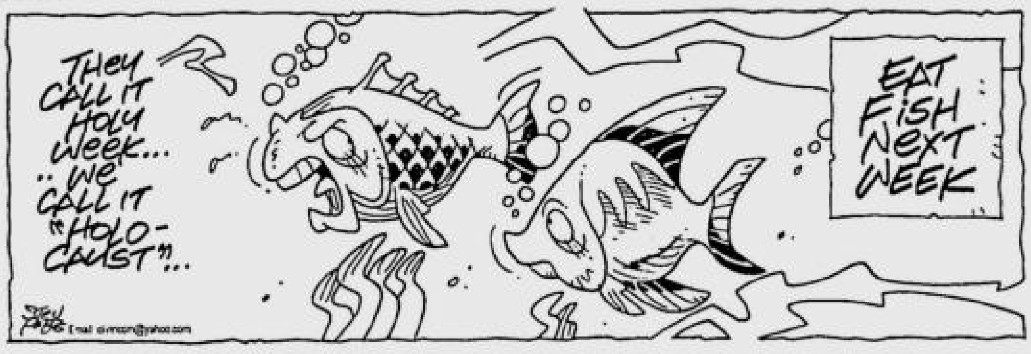
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, GUESS WHAT. I RECEIVED 102 PHONE CALLS TODAY AND I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THAT I DIDN'T ANSWER A SINGLE ONE!
AND THAT'S A GOOD THING?!! YOU WORK FOR A CUSTOMER CARE HOTLINE. SHOULDN'T YOU BE ANSWERING PHONE CALLS AND HELPING PEOPLE?
AHA! BUT I AM HELPING THEM. I'M TEACHING THEM SELF-RELIANCE!
3/30/04

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


THEY CALL IT HOLY WEEK... ..WE CALL IT "HOLO-CAUST"!..
EAT FISH NEXT WEEK

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have enormous energy, and at times you are driven to reach your goals. In part, this is because you are a visionary. Failure will not daunt you. Your standards are high: You are demanding of others as well as yourself. You're very loyal to family and friends. Important choices command your consideration this year.

Birthdate of: Eric Clapton, musician; John Astin, actor; Warren Beatty, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today gets better as it wears on. In fact, you feel increasing energy throughout the day. Expect to talk to siblings and relatives about something important.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Mild confusion today means you should not stand your ground too strongly in discussions with others. You could be off base. Cover all your options.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Confusion about money or a particular possession between you and a friend or group is possible today. Confusion means that both parties do not have the full picture.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Do not act on instructions from your superior if you have doubts about them. You might not have the whole picture. Don't be too quick to judge someone.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): In important discussions with others, make your words sweet in case you have to eat them later. Don't get on your high horse about anything! (A little humility is a good thing.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might feel tempted to force your hand about how something is divided or shared today. It's best to wait and say nothing. The confusion about this issue is not over yet.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't try to prove your point with anyone, especially your boss or a parent. It's not worth the aggravation. Your best choice is to keep a warm channel of communication open.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You might want your way at work today. You're convinced you're right about something. Although you might be, you gain little by forcing your opinions on others.

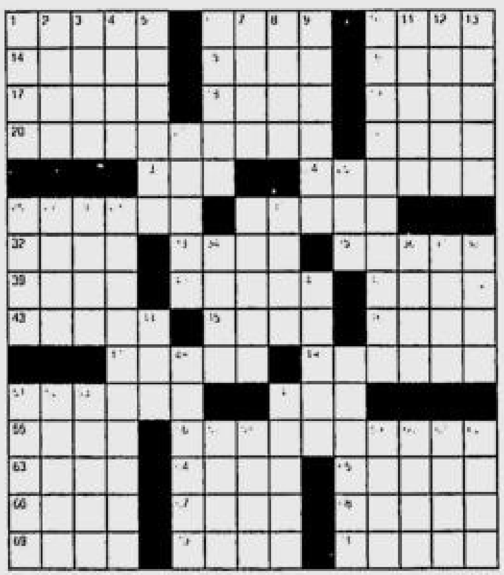
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be patient with children today. Always remember, they learn by example. They will do what you do, not what you say. (They're smart!)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might be tempted to ride roughshod over someone's feelings at home. This is not the best thing to do. Always show loved ones consideration and kindness. (Then this will be returned to you.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Conflict and arguments could arise because you identify strongly with your opinions today. Don't threaten solid relationships for nothing.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your determination to get your way in financial matters could displease someone today. Is it really that important? Think of your main objective in the overall picture. You need the support of others.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Roger Coburn
Summerville, GA

3/30/04

ACROSS
1 Vegetable dish
6 Caesar and Luckman
10 Crown of light
14 Grenoble river
15 Gardening soil
16 Of the mouth
17 Actor Kline
18 Gudrun's victim
19 Boot camp hall
20 Icy Colorado forecast
22 Facility
23 DDE's rival
24 Writer Lurie
26 Takedown
30 Austin resident
32 Cosmo rival
33 New or raw follower
35 Hat parts
39 Getz or Musial
40 Spicy condiment
42 Drugstore chain
43 Caruso or Domingo
45 Virginia dance
46 Road safety grp.
47 Slanted ltrs.
49 Portugal's peninsula
51 Trumpet's cousin
54 Arab cloak
55 Copycat
56 Shorebird of Switzerland
63 Stable locks.
64 Love god
65 "The Hundred and One Dalmatians" author Smith
66 Zest
67 Chihuahua child
68 The "in" crowd
69 Norway capital
70 Martin or Rusk
71 Discourage

DOWN
1 Monotheistic Hindu
2 Not in port
3 Son of Leah
4 Seed protector
5 Not guilty plea
6 Some Eastern Europeans
7 Smidgen
8 Surrealist painter
9 Greenbrier
10 Residence on the Tiber
11 Vicinities
12 Rodeo rope
13 Mary Kate or Ashley
21 Requirements
25 Science milieu
26 Trial by fire
27 Der __ (Adenauer)
28 Family group
29 Nevada gambling
30 Stones
31 Other
34 British peer
36 Munich's river
37 1401
38 Pop starter?
41 Suspect story
44 Map abbr.
48 Go to
50 Like marked birds
51 Walk-on part
52 Iridescent gemstones
53 Of the kidneys
54 Williams of "Happy Days"
57 Southernmost Great Lake
58 Barrett of gossip
59 Tree trunk
60 Fix a column
61 Religious ceremony
62 __-do-well

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	D	A	P	T	■	R	A	R	E	■	O	R	C	A
B	A	S	R	A	■	I	R	A	N	■	C	O	O	T
A	F	O	O	T	■	F	I	Z	Z	■	C	A	P	O
S	T	R	U	T	■	L	A	Z	Y	S	U	S	A	N
■	■	■	D	O	G	E	■	■	M	Y	R	T	L	E
C	L	A	M	O	R	■	I	M	E	N	■	■	■	■
A	I	D	A	■	O	P	H	I	■	T	I	M	E	R
K	N	A	H	■	H	E	I	N	Z	■	I	O	T	A
E	T	H	Y	L	■	A	N	T	E	■	N	O	C	K
■	■	■	■	O	A	K	E	■	B	L	Y	T	H	E
S	C	A	R	A	B	■	■	T	U	L	A	■	■	■
P	L	A	I	N	J	A	N	E	■	A	L	P	H	A
E	A	R	N	■	E	M	I	R	■	M	I	L	E	R
E	R	O	S	■	C	A	N	S	■	A	C	U	R	A
D	A	N	E	■	T	H	E	E	■	S	E	G	A	L

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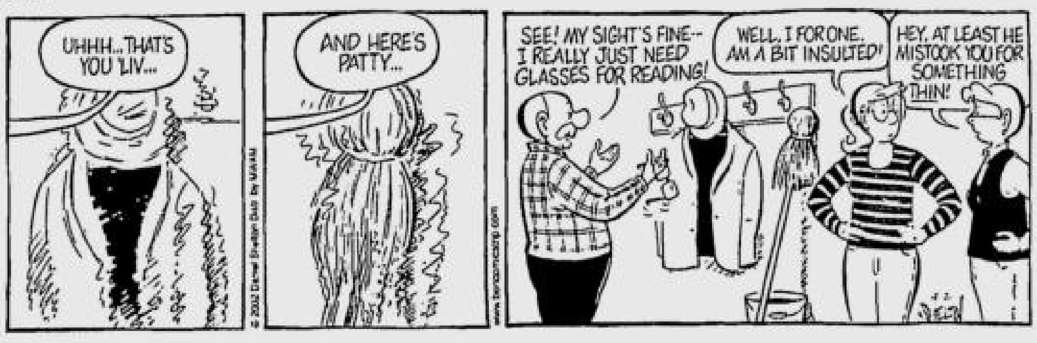
3/30/04

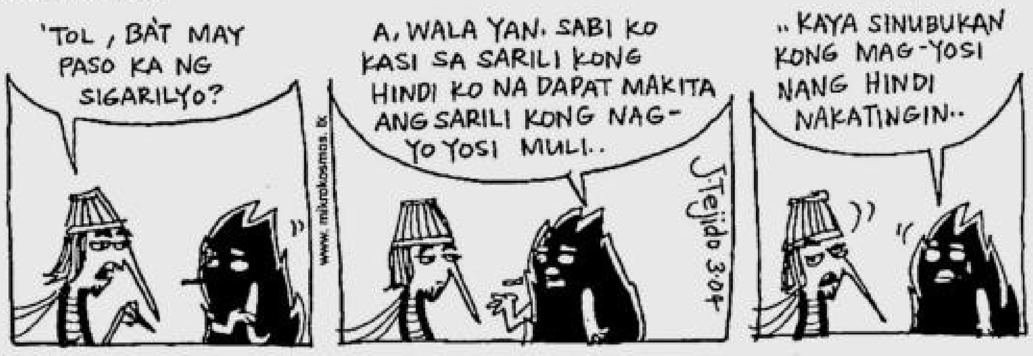
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


UHHH...THAT'S YOU 'LIV...
AND HERE'S PATTY...
SEE! MY SIGHT'S FINE-- I REALLY JUST NEED GLASSES FOR READING!
WELL, I FOR ONE, AM A BIT INSULTED!
HEY, AT LEAST HE MISTOOK YOU FOR SOMETHING THIN!
www.bencomicstrip.com

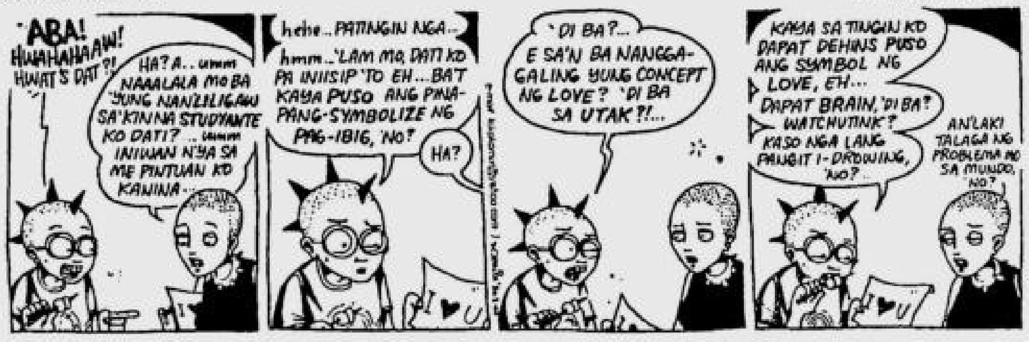
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


'TOL, BÀT MAY PASO KA NG SIGARILYO?
A, WALA YAN. SABI KO KASI SA SARILI KONG HINDI KO NA DAPAT MAKITA ANG SARILI KONG NAG-YO YOSI MULI..
..KAYA SINUBUKAN KONG MAG-YOSI NANG HINDI NAKATINGIN..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J.Tejido 3.04

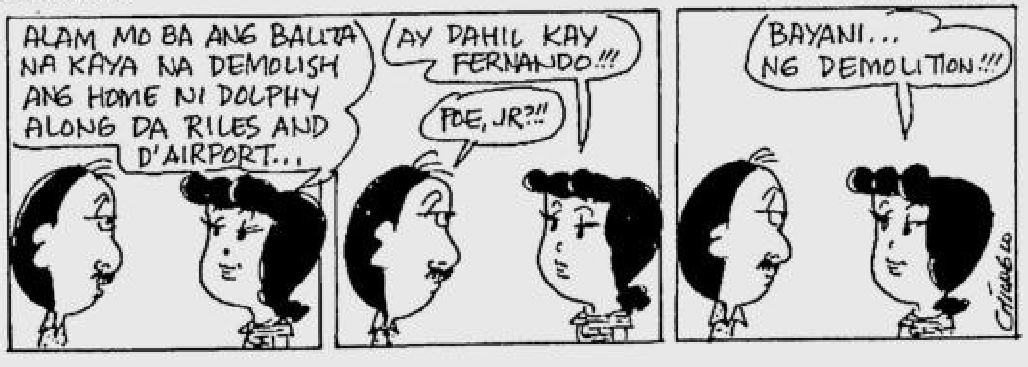
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ABA! HWAHAHAAW! HWAT'S DAT?!
HA? A...umm NAAALALA MO BA 'YUNG NANLILIGAW SA'KIN NA STUDYANTE KO DATI? ...umm INIWAN N'YA SA ME PINTUAN KO KANINA...
hehe...PATINGIN NGA...
hmm...'LAM MO, DATI KO PA INIISIP 'TO EH...BA'T KAYA PUSO ANG PINA-PANG-SYMBOLIZE NG PAG-IBIG, 'NO?
HA?
'DI BA?...
E SA'N BA NANGGA-GALING YUNG CONCEPT NG LOVE? 'DI BA SA UTAK?!...
KAYA SA TINGIN KO DAPAT DEHINS PUSO ANG SYMBOL NG LOVE, EH...
DAPAT BRAIN, 'DI BA? WATCHUTINK?
KASO NGA LANG PANGIT I-DROWING, 'NO?
AN'LAKI TALAGA NG PROBLEMA MO SA MUNDO, NO?
I ♥ U

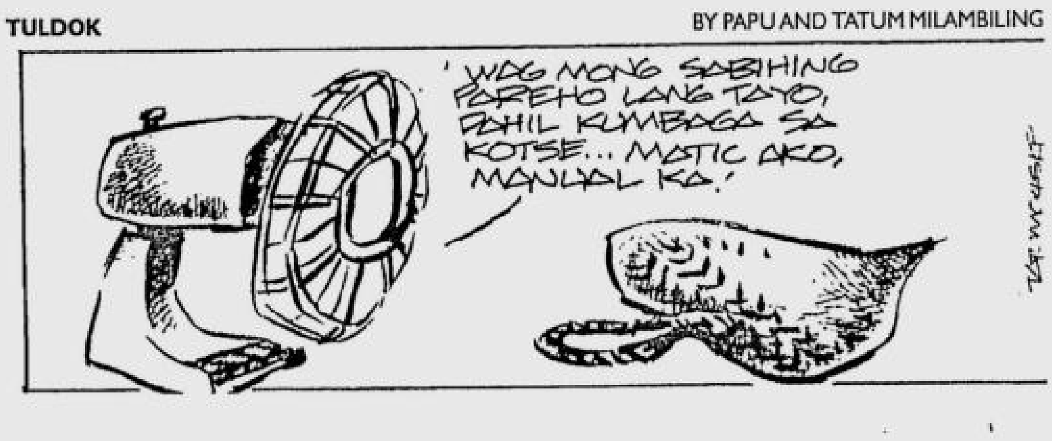
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ALAM MO BA ANG BALITA NA KAYA NA DEMOLISH ANG HOME NI DOLPHY ALONG DA RILES AND D'AIRPORT...
AY DAHIL KAY FERNANDO!!!
POE, JR?!!
BAYANI... NG DEMOLITION!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG MONG SABIHING PAREHO LANG TAYO, DAHIL KUMBAGA SA KOTSE... MATIC AKO, MANUAL KA.'

How to do well at auditions

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THERE are so many talent-search shows on TV now that most everybody appears to be lining up to audition for them. Unfortunately, you don't get to learn how to audition in school, so most people do badly during their one minute of trying to convince audition masters that they've got talent.

Of course, many people aren't really sufficiently gifted, so their bad showing at auditions isn't that big a loss to the performing world. But, what about the real talents who are inept at auditions, and are thus passed up? There is cause for concern.

Since we've auditioned hundreds of hopefuls for stage, TV and film projects, we have come up with tips on how to come up with the best audition that will showcase your specific combinations of talents:

First, be prepared. Don't decide to audition just for the heck of it, or because you're accompanying your *barkada* to an audition and you have nothing better to do.

Do research. Find out what kind of production you're auditioning for, and the parts that are available for relative "unknowns" like you. Analyze those roles, mentally target the ones best suited to you, and prepare yourself to do well in them.

If singing or dancing talent is needed, get training for those skills. However, if you have three left feet and can't sing to save your soul, all is not lost: There are shows that don't require musical talent, so you can also shine if you do drama and/or comedy well.

But you should know that most audition masters, who are often the directors of the productions that are looking for talents, are looking for versatile actors who can do a variety of roles.

So, don't limit yourself only to intense drama or slap-happy comedy. Be open to all kinds of thespic challenges.

It would also help if you aren't so hang up on yourself, your perceived limitations, and

HOW/ A22

Bad taste

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

AFTER I came out with my exposé about the overworked and underpaid staffers of ABS-CBN, the network's bigwigs are now supposedly hunting down my source. Maybe it would be better if they just tried to address the problem than to find out who spilled the beans. Network's executives are now on a mad scramble because after the **Dolphy** brouhaha, the last thing they need is another controversy. Dolphy is already an icon in the industry and his bankability remains unquestioned so he never has to worry about not having a show. But what about the hapless workforce of ABS-CBN who have no security of tenure in the network?

"You can be working in ABS for 10 years already and you still have no worth to the network. You get minimal benefits. There's no word about regularizing people. There's no guarantee that you'll still have work tomorrow," my source complained.

But my source added that some staffers are now being offered contracts. Which is in bad taste.

Hopefully, matters will be resolved soon. ABS-CBN must make their staffers feel that they want them to stay out of genuine concern and not out of desperation.

Brewing romance

LUIS Manzano and **Karel Marquez** (**Pinky Marquez**'s pretty daughter who's a commercial model) are often spotted together. Could romance be brewing between them? Karel fondly refers to Luis as "Babe Magnet" in friendster.com. Has she been magnetized by Luis' charms?

'80s theme concert

POPS Fernandez, Nina, Randy Santiago, Juan Miguel Salvador, Louie Heredia and other artists are gearing up for a major concert at the Big Dome which will have an '80s theme.

The soul of Stone

MEET **Joss Stone**, the 16-year-old wonder who has given Soul music a playful, youthful change. Like **Norah Jones, Josh Groban** and **Charlotte Church** who have given old genres fresh faces, Joss Stone gives Soul a fresh take. She is as pretty as the next pop princess, but with a voice as powerful and as impressive as **Aretha Franklin, Angie Stone, Betty Wright,** and all of the originators of Soul.

Her first single, "Fell in Love With a Boy," is Stone giving a prime example of real Soul.

The album "The Soul Sessions" has been recognized by Billboard as the No. 1 Heat Seeker Album and noted as "Buzzworthy" on MTV. The singer has already been a featured artist in MTV's "In The Cut," and is "The Rising Star" for March on MTV in the States.

For feedback e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com.

DOH: Fears of epidemic unfounded
Lacson-Perez showdown
Take the Next Step in caring for environment

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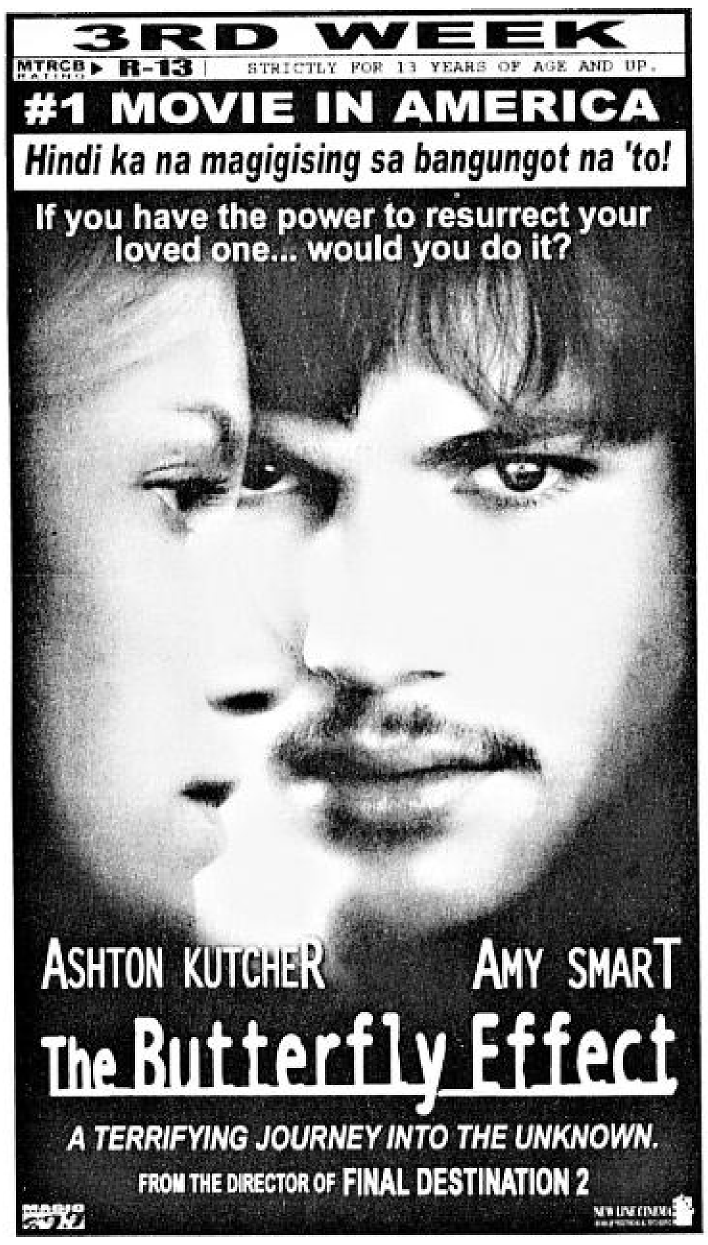
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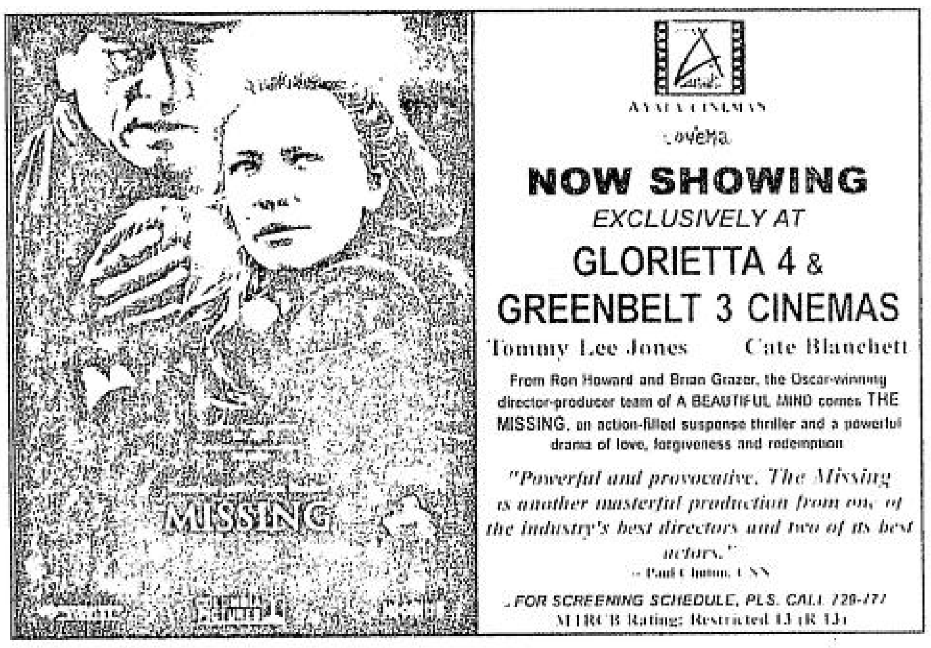
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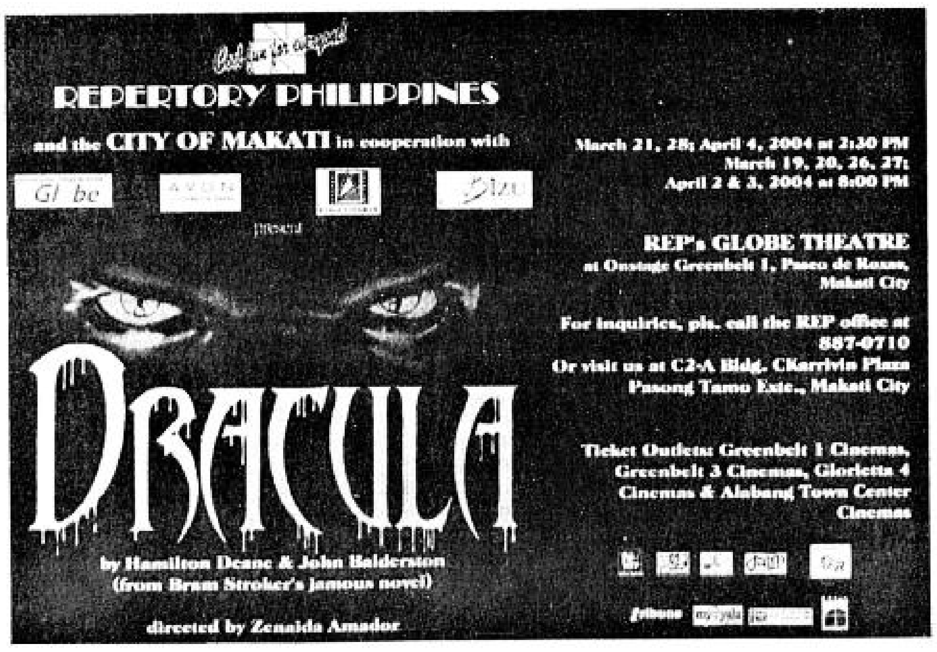
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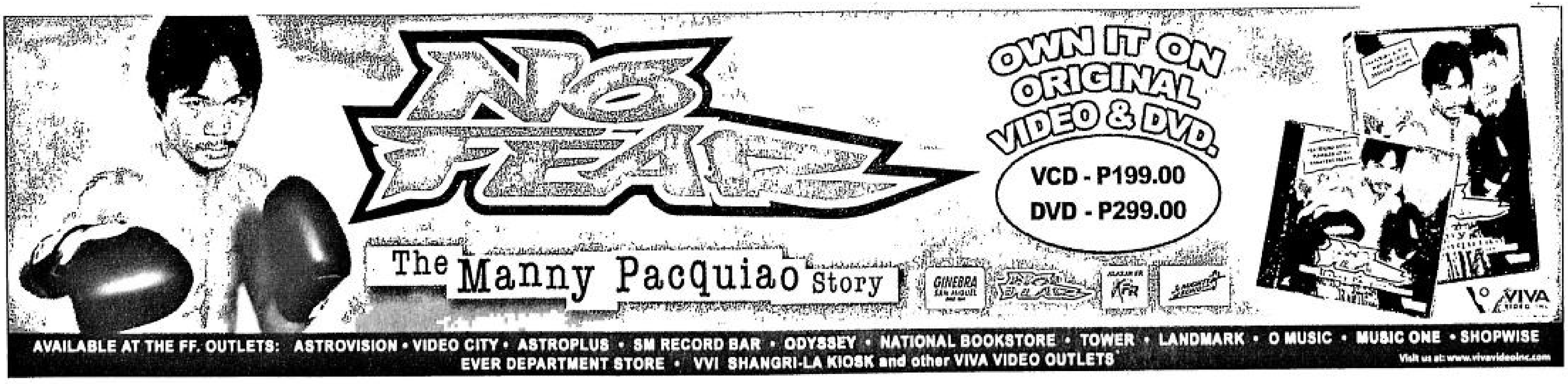
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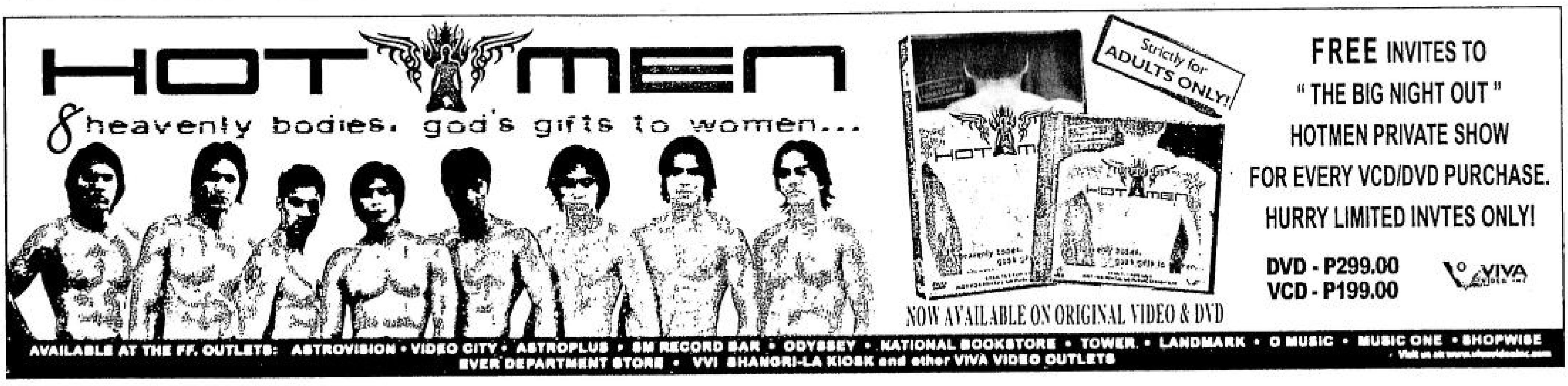
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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Bocelli Manila concert 'a test of patience'

Local producer took 3 years to negotiate show

By Marinel R. Cruz

IT TOOK the local producer of the show for Italian blind tenor Andrea Bocelli three years to negotiate for the singer's Manila show.

Socialite and philanthropist Baby Arenas, Bocelli's local producer, told INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview that negotiating with Bocelli's camp "really tested my patience."

Arenas has been negotiating with Marco Bianchi, Bocelli's manager, for almost three years.

"Negotiating for Bocelli to come to Manila really tested my patience," said Arenas. "One camp would not allow this, one camp would not allow that."

Very particular

She said the tenor was "very particular" even with the kind of sponsors the producer would be getting for his show.

"Bocelli has a contract with Armani so we cannot mention any other brand," Arenas pointed out.

Arenas also had to agree to a one-night show. She also had no say on the tenor's arrival date in Manila.

"We cannot dictate," she stressed. "We also cannot limit the number of people included in his entourage."

These were "strict" rules and regulations the local producer had to follow before Bocelli's Italian promoters finally agreed to hold a show here.

"I told them I would do anything, no matter how hard, no matter how expensive, no matter how patient I need to be," she said. "It was good that when everybody sat down and talked about everything, it turned out okay."

Bocelli will be coming to Manila for a one-night concert on April 30 at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City.

Repertoire

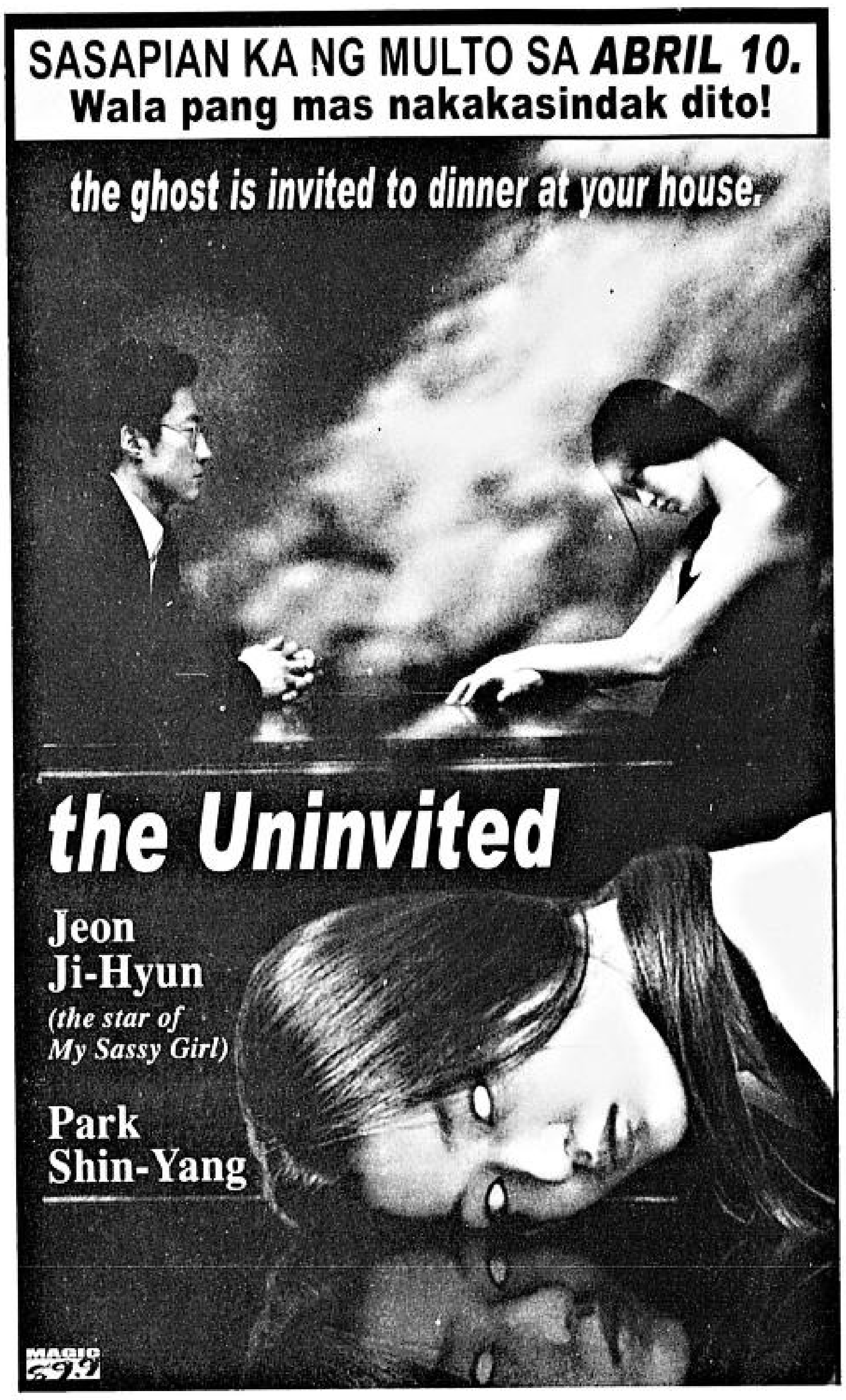
The time of the concert, the number of press conferences and dinner engagements Bocelli would attend were also specified, according to Arenas.

"The most important condition was that the repertoire would only be approved by (Bocelli), and no one else," she said. "We can only recommend songs but it would be up to him to decide whether he would include it in his repertoire.

"We shall announce his repertoire once we receive it," Arenas said.

But Bianchi, in a press conference yesterday at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, said Bocelli would be

BOCELLI/ A23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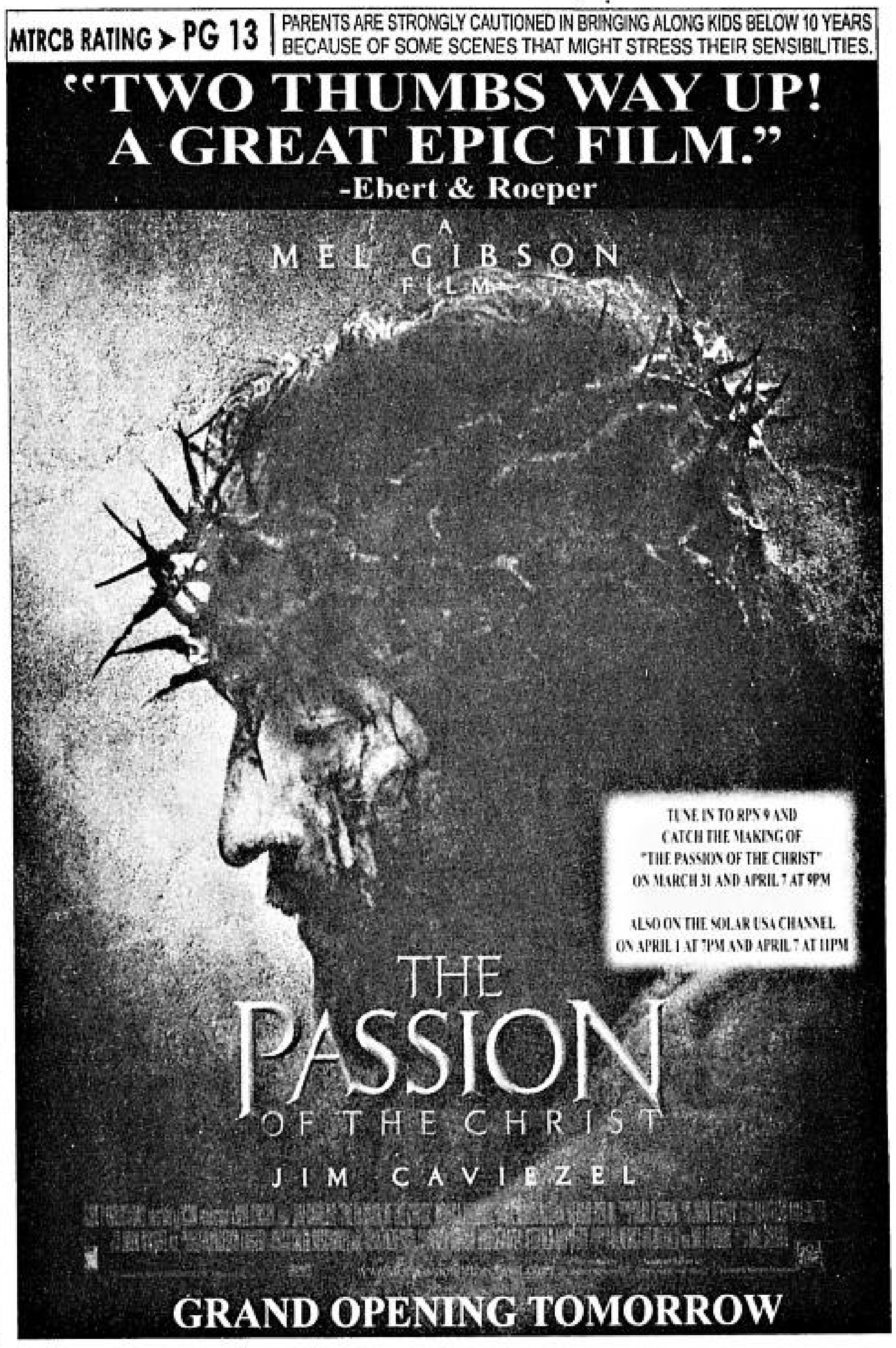
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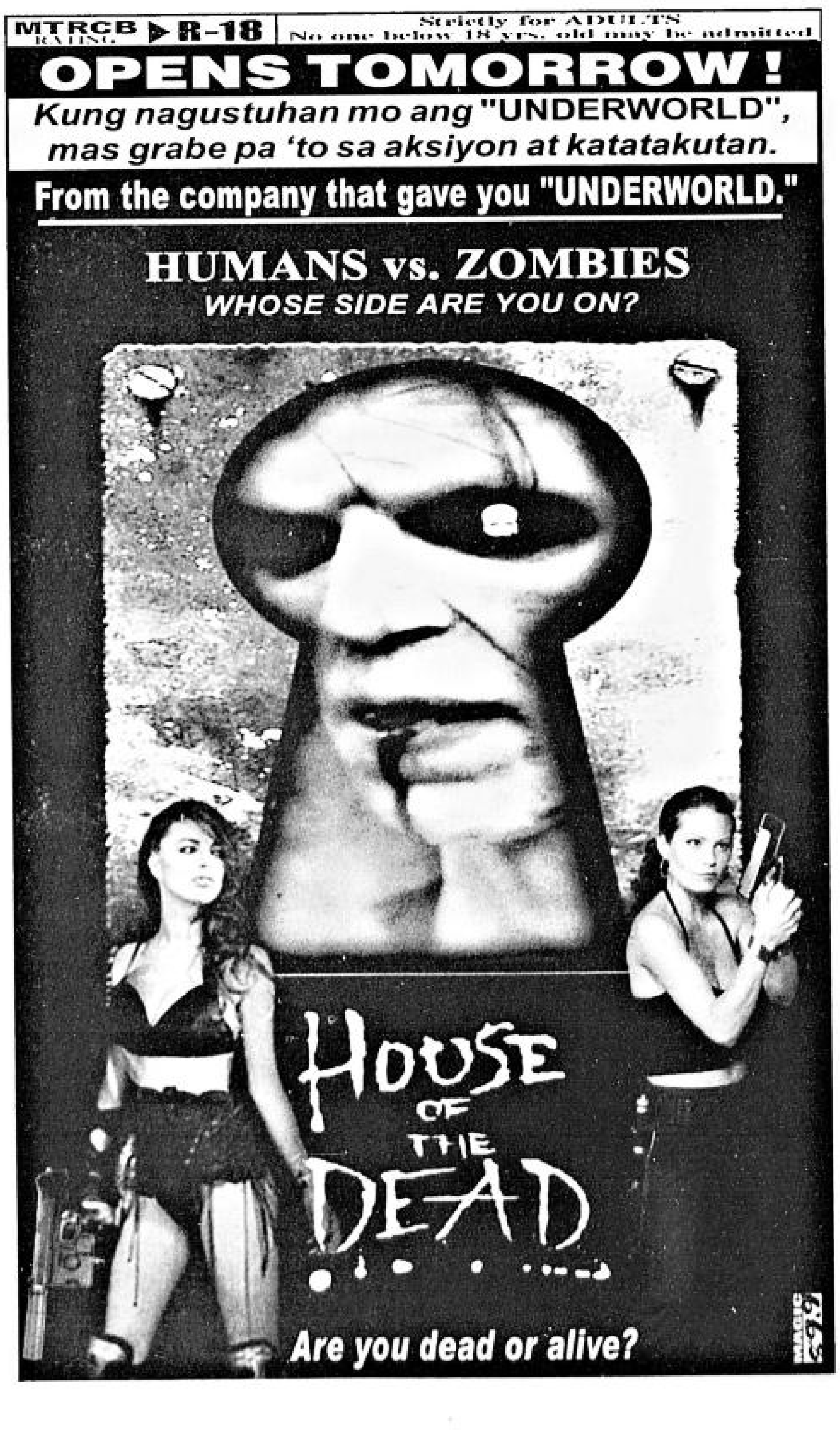
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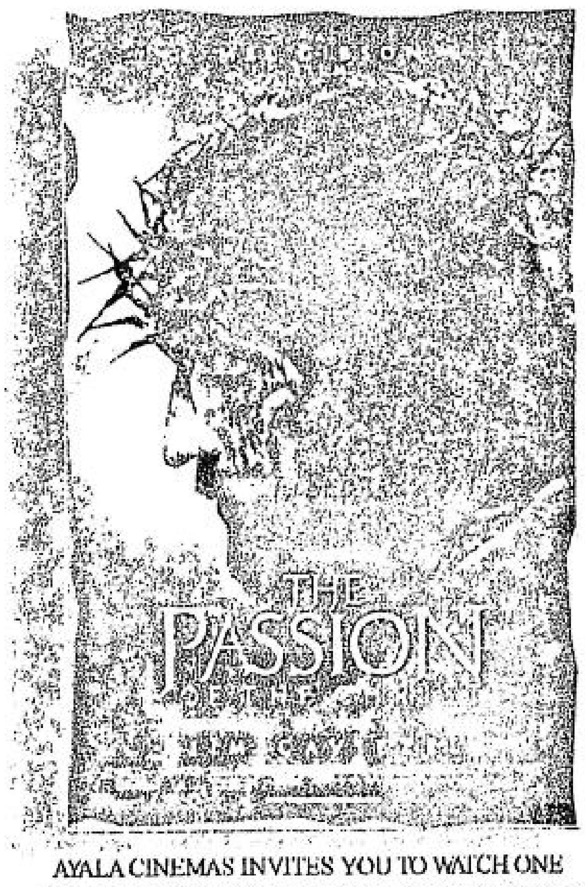
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Cinema 2 - 11:50 AM, 2:30 PM, 5:10
Cinema 3 - 12:20 PM, 3:00, 5:40, 8:20, 11:00

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 - 11:45 AM, 2:40 PM, 5:35, 8:30, 11:25
Cinema 2 - 12:55 PM, 3:50, 6:45, 9:40
Cinema 3 (THX) - 1:25 PM
Cinema 8 - 11:10 AM, 2:05 PM, 5:00, 7:55, 10:50

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 2 – 11:25 AM, 1:35 PM, 4:25
Cinema 3 - 1:00 PM, 3:30, 6:00, 8:50
Cinema 4 – 11:40 AM, 2:10 PM, 4:40, 10:00

GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 - 12:45 PM, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00
Cinema 2 – 10:30 AM, 1:15 pm, 4:00, 6:45, 9:30

GREENBELT 1
Cinema 1 - 11:50 AM, 2:35 PM, 5:20, 8:05
Cinema 2 – 11:20 AM, 2:05 PM, 4:50, 7:35, 10:20

GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 (THX) – 2:05 PM, 4:50, 7:35, 10:20
Cinema 2 (THX) – 2:35 PM, 5:20, 10:50
Cinema 3 - 12:20 PM, 3:05, 5:50, 11:20
Cinema 4 – 9:05 PM, 11:50
Cinema 5 – 9:40 PM

For inquiries, call 752-7880 or 82 (Glorietta 4), 893-4254 (Glorietta 1)
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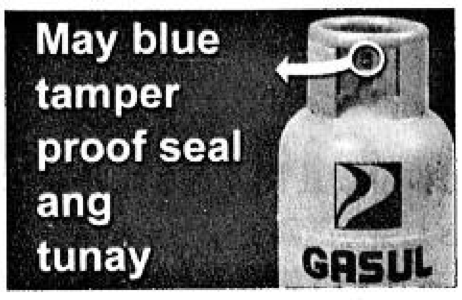
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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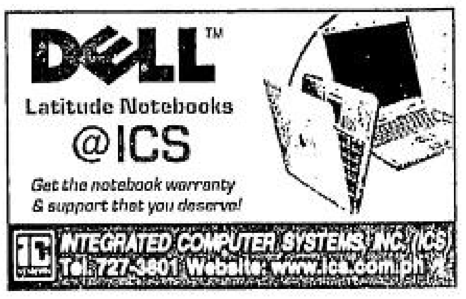
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Gov't rejects all bids on treasury bills

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT rejected all bids on its treasury bills yesterday after banks demanded high yields because of fears the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would defend the faltering peso with a rate increase.

National Treasurer Mina Figueroa told reporters the government had sufficient cash, but did not say how much. The Treasury has rejected several bids in recent weeks.

If the Treasury had accepted the bids, the three-month treasury bill rate would have risen to an average 7.856 percent from the previous 7.616 percent while the average rate of the 182-day bill would have jumped to 9.24 percent from 8.612 percent. The average rate of the 364-day bills would have jumped to 10.067 percent, compared to 8.384 percent awarded at an auction on Feb. 2.

Banks use the 91-day treasury bill rate in pricing their loans.

Figueroa said bidders were demanding a high premium "maybe because they think the central bank might hike overnight rates given the weak peso."

The bank has kept official rates unchanged since July 2003 as benign inflation supported its neutral policy. The country's overnight interest rate is at 6.75 percent with lending at 9 percent.

Debt market traders said anxiety about the presidential election on May 10 had also affected sentiment.

"The government still does not want to pay a higher premium for political risk," a trader said.

Polls show incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo and political novice and movie star Fernando Poe Jr. running neck-and-neck in tefms of approval ratings.

Figueroa likewise surmised that the low appetite among banks for short-term government securities could be brought about by their heightened interest in dollars as seen by the still relatively weak peso.

"That's the reason I have been hearing, but the question on why demand is lackluster should be raised to the banks," she said.

The national treasurer said the government could reject unreasonably high bids in the next auctions as its cash position stayed healthy.

Tenders for the 91-day bills reached only P2.72 billion compared with the P3.5 billion on offer. For the 182-day paper, tenders also stood low at only P1.31 billion as against the P2.5-billion offering, while tenders for the 364-day bills amounted to only P1.405 billion, or lower than the P2-billion offering.

The Treasury will be auctioning off today four-year treasury bonds.

"We may expect volumes coming in for the four-year T-bonds," said Figueroa, noting that with the current climate of political uncertainty, long-term government securities may be more attractive to investors.

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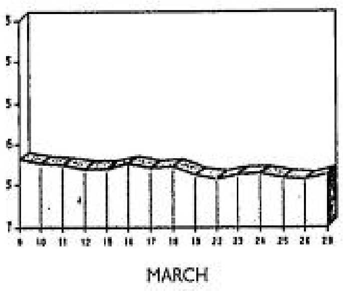

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 56.36 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 29, 2004

Y 105.64 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 26, 2004

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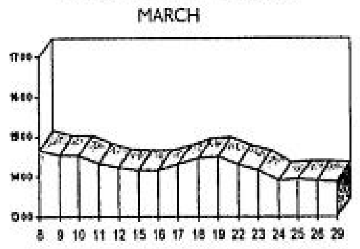
per ounce Hong Kong, March 29, 2004

STOCK MARKET

Stocks dip on politics, security woes


PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
MARCH

(See stock market report on Page B6)

STOCKS closed slightly lower yesterday due to worries about upcoming presidential elections and threats by communist rebels who have said they will step up their violent anti-government insurgency.

Traders said the weakness of the peso, trading just above last week's all-time low of 56.45 to the dollar, added to the gloom.

The 33-share main index slipped 0.2 percent or 2.77 points to 1,388.15 points. It has lost 3.76 percent since the start of the year.

"The recent threat of the NPA rebels to conduct more attacks also gave investors a sour taste," said Astro del Castillo, managing director of First Grade Holdings Inc., referring to the New Peoples' Army.

The NPA, labelled by the military as the country's top security threat, has stepped up its attacks, including on government infrastructure, in rural areas in recent weeks.

Del Castillo said he expected the main index to move between 1,380 and 1,400 points this week.

Mobile phone provider Globe Telecom slipped P5 to P795 while Bank of the Philippine Islands lost 1.15 percent or 50 centavos to P43.

Turnover fell 53 percent to P275.52 million from P590.8 million on Friday.

STOCKS/ B6

Local firms 'slightly pessimistic' about 2004

BUSINESSES from all sectors of the economy are "slightly pessimistic" about 2004, with uncertainty arising from the kind of political and economic environment that may take place after the May elections.

According to the recently conducted International Business Survey by research firm Grant Thornton, the overall business outlook for the Philippines during the current year had a balance of negative one percent. The balance is the difference between the number of companies who said they were optimistic and those who noted they were pessimistic.

Among the 150 respondents, composed of Filipino medium enterprises, 34 percent said they considered increasing market competition, either by local or foreign counterpart, as a major threat to their businesses. This may be attributed to the increasing liberalization brought by the country's participation in the World Trade Organization.

Aside from threats, the firms likewise raised the factors which they considered as major constraints in the conduct of doing businesses. Forty percent of the respondents cited tight government regulations and red tape as the biggest stumbling blocks to smooth business operations. Other constraints mentioned included shortage of working capital and increasing cost of financing.

Businesses in the Philippines have often cited the high cost of doing business as a risk factor in investing in the Philippines. Major factors often cited by local industries in the increasing cost of doing business are the high cost of labor and electricity.

But while more Filipino firms said they were pessimistic about the current year, they likewise said they expected a good revenue performance for the year. The survey showed that revenue prospects for the year had a balance of +49 percent. The figure, however, was lower than the +58 recorded in the global setting.

Aside from revenue, companies in the Philippines were also optimistic that there would be an increase in investment in plant and machinery with a balance of +40 percent, which was higher than the global average of +35 percent.

To maintain or improve profitability, most (93 percent) of the respondent-firms said they took on the strategy of improving their cash management. Other methods cited to improve profitability included better management of clients and reducing cost.

The survey was conducted in 26 countries, while samples were taken from independent medium-sized businesses in line with each government's definition, said Grant Thornton. *Michelle V. Remo*

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Fuel prices seen to rise with world crude

By Abigail L. Ho

MOTORISTS may have to bear yet another burden in the form of higher oil prices by next month as world petroleum prices continue to defy earlier projections of a decline in March and April.

Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion yesterday said in a news briefing that prices of crude in the world market continued to rise, further jacking up the under-recoveries of local oil firms.

The benchmark Dubai crude averaged $30.91 per barrel in the period covering March 1-26. The' figure is more than $2 higher than the February average of $28.61. Also, the peso remained weak against the dollar, averaging P56.29 to a greenback.

The Mean of Platts Singapore pricing benchmark for finished petroleum products likewise remained on the high side at a month-to-date average of $44.01 per barrel for unleaded gasoline, and $38.29 per barrel for diesel.

Concepcion said oil firms would likely implement hikes in the pump prices of gasoline and the socially sensitive diesel by next month because of these escalating prices.

However, he declined to give specific figures on how much pump prices would go up.

Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association chair Fernando Martinez said in a telephone interview that, even after the 60-centavo price hike in gasoline implemented more than a week ago, new players still had to recover around 60 centavos per liter for gasoline, and 90 centavos per liter for diesel.

"We still don't know how much the movement will be, and when exactly we will implement it," he said. "We can't say .for certain if we'll increase next month. We hope prices would improve because then we could continue to bear the under-recoveries. But if prices worsen, that's another story altogether."

The reality right now is that prices in the world market are continuing to go up, when they are supposed to go down, Concepcion said.

According to industry projections made earlier, the Dubai crude should go down to $24 per barrel in the second and third quarters, and to $26 per barrel in the fourth quarter. But going into the second quarter, Dubai crude remained at the $30-per-barrel average.

During the summer, more people will travel in the US and the rest of the world, according to Concepcion. He added that the Madrid bombing and the planned production cut of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries also had a hand in the impending hike of local fuel prices in April.

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■ Faculty

Professor ARMI RUBY MARIE H. CORTES is a member of the core faculty at the Center for Executive Education and Lifelong Learning. She teaches Information Technology Management, e-Commerce, and e-Governance. She is an active IT industry specialist for DAI-Agile, an organization under the umbrella of the USAID.

Prof. JOSE JESUS F. ROCES specializes in marketing, finance and human resource development, with particular emphasis on strategic marketing, e-Marketing, and CRM. He has been involved in various organizations with major achievements in the field of marketing, public relations and promotions, market research and development, as well as organization development and planning. He was the former president of the Philippine Marketing Association and is the president of the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation.

Prof. GASTON D. ORTIGAS, JR. is the Pepsi Cola Professor of Business Management. He teaches total quality management (TQM), operations management (OM) and information management (IM), and runs computer-based management simulations and exercises. His current research areas of interest include: sustainable enterprise management, electronic commerce, knowledge management, and flexible learning methodologies.

Prof. ARUP MAITY is the founder and currently President and CEO of Blastasia Inc., a leading provider of internet-based Customer Relationship Management Solutions. He is a qualified Civil Engineer and had been the director handling the Business Planning Division at Landco Property Holding Corp.

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BIR execs seek ADB grant to upgrade tax credit system

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is seeking a grant from the Asian Development Bank to finance the revenue agency's planned upgrade of its tax credit system.

According to BIR officials, flaws in the present system has resulted in revenue loss amounting to billions of pesos. With the grant, bureau officials hope to upgrade the monitoring of the use of tax credit certificates (TCCs), which criminal syndicates have manipulated to defraud government.

According to BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares, bureau officials recently met with ADB representatives to discuss the revenue agency's request for a grant. But Henares said that the BIR has yet to come up with an amount for its request.

"The current manual system does not ensure accurate monitoring of TCCs issued to company beneficiaries," Henares told reporters. "That is why we badly need to computerize."

The need to improve government's monitoring of the use and transfer of TCCs has become critical with the discovery of cases of tax credit fraud—the most recent of which was the P24-million scam pulled off in the name of Rohm Electronics.

The scam involved the sale of used TCCs in the name of Rohm Electronics to Splash Manufacturing Corp. and Nissan Motors Corp. The TCCs were worth P24 million, but they were sold to the two recipient companies at a discounted price of P21 million.

Splash and Nissan officials said that they were unaware the TCCs sold to them were fraudulent, and used the said papers to settle their tax obligations with the BIR. The settlement cost the government P24 million.

The application for the sale of the used TCCs escaped the scrutiny of the Department of Finance's One-Stop Shop Duty and Credit Drawback Center, where the application initially passed through.

The resale of the used TCCs likewise escaped the BIR's notice, since the bureau still uses index cards to note the amount of utilization of TCCs by a recipient company.

Sources said that in the case of Rohm Electronics, the index card that contained records of the firm's tax credit utilization was lost. The BIR therefore could not validate whether the TCCs presented by Splash and Nissan had already been utilized or not.

Fear and square

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

ASIDE, perhaps, from the election, which is expected to be fair and square to all candidates even though the exercise is normally "expensive" for business—which is probably why most of the taipans are out of town—nothing much bothers businessmen nowadays.

They are only worried about the poor peace and order situation, rising terrorism, swelling budget deficit, exploding government debts, dying industries, decaying infrastructure, etc.

And so as part of a PR campaign, dealing with what this cute administration refers to as "kitchenomics," which it claims the opposition is selling to the electorate, the Palace is coming up with another bright idea.

Last I heard, it's all systems go in this cute administration of Gloriaetta for the activation of the so-called national anti-smuggling task force, or Nastf.

You can just imagine how businessmen are already shaking with fear. With that bright idea, they have another armed group to deal with, for every cargo from the ports, from hi-tech electronic chips to "pakong bakya."

***

SMUGGLING, surely, is one of the biggest complaints of the business community. Today we import everything. We even import "fake" goods. Where do you think all those pirated DVDs, VCDs and CDs come from—my nose?

Now this cute administration has not lifted a finger to stop the operations of identified jueteng lords, particularly in *lahar* country, which is the territory of Bong this or Bong that, who is said to be ... "very supportive."

But this cute administration must stop smuggling at all cost. Somebody just convinced Gloriaetta that she merely had to form another layer of bureaucracy on top of the Bureau of Customs and, presto, smuggling would disappear just like that.

From what I gathered, somebody sold Gloriaetta the Nastf bright idea with one major sales pitch. And that is, the task force would limit itself to fighting the smugglers of vegetables and sugar.

Excuse me, but do we really need a whole separate heavily armed task force for those dangerous, hazardous goods?

***

ANYWAY, that's how things work at the Palace. Recently, you see, media had been busy exposing high profile smuggling of vegetables from China.

It was said to be hurting the farmers. The smuggled vegetables could cause a drop in the prices of local produce. This might be good for us, consumers, but it could kill the farmers.

As for sugar, the industrial users have been pushing for open importation of much cheaper sugar from Thailand and Australia.

But the government has stood pat on protecting the local sugar industry, and that is not because Jose Pidal comes from sugar land, both the real and the fake.

Anyway, the point is, sugar and vegetable smuggling just went high profile in media. It is a good issue to take action on, particularly in this neck-and-neck race.

***

ONLY last Friday, the main figures in the formation of Nastf met again. They were Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo and Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Reyes, who was already assigned to head the so-called national anti-kidnapping task force, or Naktf, was also supposed to head Nastf.

Surely the Bureau of Customs did not welcome the new task force with open arms and legs, *este*, hearts *pala*. For the bureau, it was an issue of turf.

Thus the Palace, through Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, worked overtime on Bernardo, apparently to convince him that Nastf is a bright idea.

Bernardo and Reyes again met last Friday to thresh out the details of the operations of the new task force, not necessarily to divide the spoils.

***

ON PAPER, the Nastf is designed to combat vegetable and sugar smuggling, but you cannot stop the task force from, well, "stumbling" upon something else. And then what?

In that case, based on the meeting last Friday, the task force must act beyond the call of duty and shoot the bastar ... no, just apprehend the offenders.

It's hard to say if the customs bureau needs help in monitoring smuggling inside the ports.

Inside a port, you can do a lot of "technical smuggling," for example, when you try, er, to "save" on import duties and taxes.

I just know that you can easily do outright smuggling outside the ports, such as, at the private piers of a certain MT in Batangas.

Gosh, the last time I checked, we still had more than seven thousand islands. It's not easy for the customs bureau to monitor all of them.

***

BEFORE the bright idea came up, the customs bureau was already getting help from other agencies, such as the Presidential Security Group, and another one called Asic.

Nobody knows how many fingers are dipping into the customs bureau pie. It's just that, you cannot find any record showing how many smuggling attempts were foiled by the PSG and Asic at the ports.

Anyway, inside the ports, if you believe the figures, the customs bureau seems to be managing well enough, thank you.

Official records will tell you that, last year, collection of the customs bureau reached P106 billion, which was P6 billion more than its target.

This year the collection target is P112 billion. The bureau is already P4 billion ahead of target for the first quarter. In short, it is getting better doing its job.

***

BUT the high profile cases of sugar and vegetable smuggling must now bear upon the customs bureau—and surely the business community.

No wonder, this cute administration wants to show everybody that it is doing something about the problem by creating the new task force.

It did not matter that those high profile cases of vegetable and sugar smuggling were isolated cases. And how did we come to know about them?

Precisely, they became sensational news in media because the attempts were foiled by the customs bureau itself.

It also does not matter to this cute administration that the new task force is making business nervous. It can stop any cargo, by merely "stumbling" upon it.

***

THESE are like the good old days of martial rule again, when a similar square task force could stop any cargo coming out of the ports. It merely heightened the fear factor in business.

Surely, the new task force can make life hard for a lot of smugglers. For one, it can add to their, well, "cost of doing business." The task force means another set of hands to grease.

But really now, can we expect the task force to stop smuggling? It did not happen during martial rule. And I am not sure things have changed that much.

In the first place, what expertise do the task force members have in checking whether a shipment is smuggled or not? All they have are the persuasive power of guns!

DAR cancels $23M in approved ADB loans

By C. A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agrarian Reform has canceled some $23 million in approved loans from the Asian Development Bank due to the weakening of the peso.

According to Agrarian Reform Secretary Jose Maria Ponce, the agency could save on commitment fees with the cancellation of the loans, which were earmarked for the Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP).

Last year, there was a slowdown in the implementation of the ARCP, which directly provides support services for agrarian communities in far-flung provinces, due to the lack of counterpart funds from the national government worth P1.1 billion.

This year, however, the DAR has tapped the Marcos ill-gotten wealth, providing it with as much as P2 billion for the ARCP.

Ponce said the project implementation delay encountered for the ADB-funded project last year due to budgetary constraints would now be addressed.

DAR recently received an initial P15 billion from the P38 billion recovered from the Marcos ill-gotten wealth. This will be used by DAR for its budget until next year.

The money has been released to DAR following the recent issuance of a writ of execution by the Supreme Court to release the money to the national government. Of the P38 billion, DAR will get P30 billion. The remaining P8 billion will be used to compensate human rights victims during martial law.

Ponce said the bulk of the P15 billion would be used to acquire lands and pay former landowners whose pieces of property have been distributed to farmers under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

He said 70 percent of DAR's budget for this year would be used for CARP while the rest would be used for delivering basic support services to agrarian reform communities.

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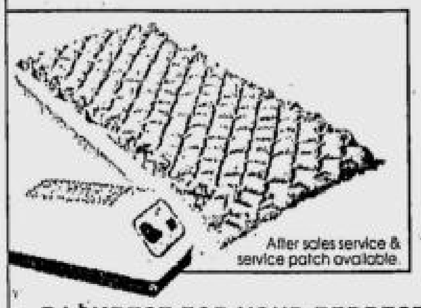
Synopsis of Annual Statement
As of 31 December 2002

ADMITTED ASSETS	
Bonds	P 5,400,000.00
Investment in Treasury Bills	119,900,000.00
Stocks	65,785.00
Security Fund	17,099.00
Other Investments	5,400,000.00
Cash on Hand and in Banks	94,015,510.96
Premiums Receivable	64,467,615.09
Premiums Due From Ceding Companies	4,507,627.79
Reinsurance Recoverable on Losses	38,978,039.32
Accrued Investment Income	1,284.01
EDP Equipment	1,672,799.55
Total Admitted Assets	P 334,425,760.72
LIABILITIES	
Losses and Claims Payable	P 35,629,195.72
Loss Adjustment Expenses Payable	701,422.37
Reserve for Unearned Premiums	6,428,963.34
Premiums Due to Reinsurers	75,617,182.10
Premiums Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers	4,431,382.46
Other RI Accounts Payable	2,872,133.65
Commissions Payable	2,904,870.69
Accrued Expenses	5,848,882.94
Taxes Payable	87,917,451.21
Catastrophe Loss Reserve	399,349.10
Accounts Payable	34,636,654.51
Unearned Bond Discount	993,784.48
Other Liabilities	9,727,078.72
Total Liabilities	P 268,108,351.29
STOCKHOLDER'S EQUITY	
Capital Stock Paid-Up	P 50,000,000.00
Contributed Surplus	4,666,000.00
Retained Earnings	11,651,409.43
Total Stockholder's Equity	P66,317,409.43
Total Liabilities & Stockholder's Equity	P 334,425,760.72

(This synopsis, prepared from the 2002 Annual Statement approved by the Insurance Commissioner, is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code.)

You don't have to wake up with back sores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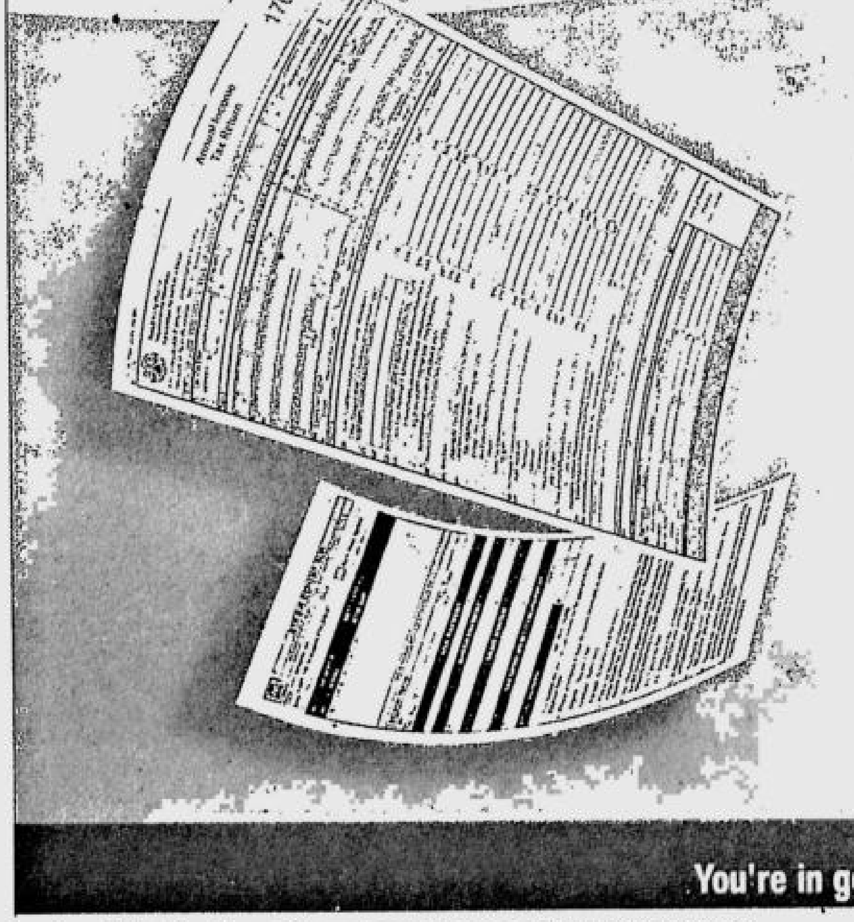

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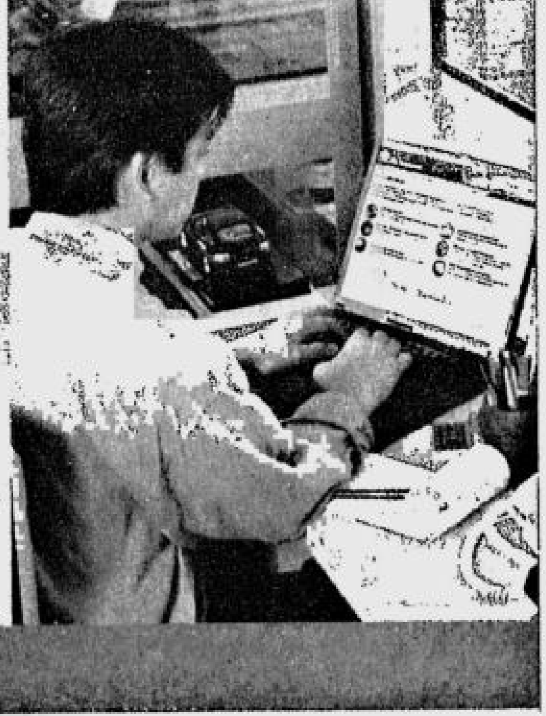

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

2-tower condo rises in Bonifacio Global City

By Charles E. Buban

BONIFACIO Global City is envisioned as the modern and fully master-planned business district in the country.

A destination for local and international business, the district will soon host a premium residential complex that will take advantage of the district's strategic location.

Bonifacio Ridge is located in the northwestern portion of Bonifacio Global City—right beside Fairway 13 of the Manila Golf Course—offering fantastic views of the greens as well as the Makati Central Business District skyline.

"As the first residential development managed and marketed by the Ayala Land Inc., Bonifacio Ridge offers families a premier residence complete with first-rate amenities, recreational facilities and security features," describes Leya Moya, project development manager of Bonifacio Ridge.

Two towers

The Bonifacio Ridge sits on a 7,643-sq-m lot that features a two 18-story (Cypress Point and Spanish Bay towers) residential condominium development with a shared podium.

It offers a 4,000-sq-m recreational space that comes with landscaped gardens, a sizeable swimming pool, kiddie pool, playground, a multipurpose hall and even a tree-lined jogging area.

According to Moya, the developer Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. has been quite generous in providing common space for residents.

"It is rare to have a large area such as a podium in this kind of residential development," says Moya.

Prime hub

When ALI took over the management of the Fort Bonifacio Development Corp.—the first residential condominium to be managed and marketed—it adhered to the vision of the master-planned Fort Bonifacio Global City becoming a prime residential and business hub but this time with nature parks and ample walkways to go around.

BONIFACIO Ridge is a beautifully crafted two-tower residential condominium with a shared podium.

Considering the growing need for homes that meet the discriminating city lifestyle, Bonifacio Ridge proved to be a perfect choice

With Bonifacio Ridge conveniently located at the heart of this emerging community, residents are set to enjoy quality space within and around its location.

Says Moya: "This is a standard in all of ALI's projects so it is natural that the same privilege is enjoyed by residents of Bonifacio Ridge."

Considering the growing need for homes that meets the discriminating city lifestyle, Bonifacio Ridge proved to be a perfect choice. "This is definitely one place that offers true value for money, for carefree yet comfortable living," Moya brags.

Two-bedroom units

The residential condominium will offer two-bedroom units with an average 113 sq m more or less at P7 million to P11 million.

Model units, which are available for viewing on First Street, Crescent Park West, Bonifacio City, were conceptualized by Tina Periquet, a Pratt Institute of Design New York graduate and partner at design company Periquet-Galicia.

According to Periquet, her concept fits perfectly in the Bonifacio Ridge vision of providing homes for those who value comfort, ease and practical luxury in their place of residence.

"Bonifacio Ridge understands that people want to come home to a place that will welcome them with a sophisticated charm, and yet at the same time, still has all the practical comforts that make them want to stay," says Moya.

"A home you would like to actually live in, is one that is not only beautiful and pleasant, but also one that is warm, natural and liberating," she concludes.

Nusa Dua welcomes new farm lot owners

LIKE a verdant green pasture, Nusa Dua in Tanza, Cavite, is now a wonderful sancruary for leisurely living. What once was a brown expanse of land is now a sight to behold.

A fun-filled event was prepared by Nusa Dua recently for its weekend farmers and guests. Existing weekend farmers warmly welcomed the new farm lot owners. Copies of the Transfer Certificate of Titles and farmer's starter kits were given, signifying the beginning of a leisure farm life that encourages the appreciation of the earth's bounty.

From the main gateway, designed as a replica of the ruins found in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, the scenery becomes nature's landscape of full-grown fruit trees, green grass carpeting the children's playground and park and a tree house made for children's play. Anticipating that its weekend dwellers will look for restful spots to spend their days of relaxation, the Nusa Dua park has provided comfortable seating areas under the shade of mature trees. During cool, breezy afternoons, Balinese-inspired gazebos make ideal lounging areas to take a nap or read a book.

THE IMPRESSIVE main gate of Nusa Dua is inspired by the famous landmark at Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia.

A BALINESE rest lounge accentuates the row of ponds with floating waterlilies.

Ideal venue for celebration

With some of the amenities already available, the buyers have discovered Nusa Dua as a new and ideal venue for celebration. Weddings and children's parties are now being held at the park.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the clubhouse facilities was held on Sunday at Nusa Dua. A simulation of the different components of the clubhouse will be set up so that weekend farmers can get a taste of what the clubhouse has to offer once it becomes fully operational by Dec. 24.

Ocular trips to Nusa Dua are being organized. For a firsthand appreciation of Nusa Dua, call 727-0431.

Termite infestation deadly as fire in consuming homes

WHERE there is smoke, there is usually fire. A figure of speech really but it rings true for most fire incidents in the country. Tricky as they are, fires come with a mere puff of warning and most often than not strike when no one is looking. So, everyone is left to deal with the damages they caused and even lives lost.

A home catching fire is a nightmare for a homeowner but did you know that termite infestation could do just as much damage? A home turned into ashes is as bad as being eaten away by termites. The spread of flame is just as fast as how termites breed then feeding on walls, ceilings, doors or any wooden structure throughout the house. Worst, they do not stop until they have devoured everything.

Termite infestation

The costly reconstruction caused by fires is dependent on the extent of the damage and size of the property. The same goes for termite infestation, the more their presence is ignored, the more damage they can do to a property.

It is why homeowners should be concerned about keeping infestation from ever happening. They must be more vigilant when it comes to termites especially if they come unexpectedly. A good roof above one's head makes for a secured, hassle-free life.

So, to prevent termite infestation from recklessly consuming a costly home reconstruction, make sure there is Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System to guarantee that much-needed protection.

Long-term solution

Sentricon offers a long-term solution against voracious termites. The process of extermination does not leave residues or odor in the soil because it uses a baiting system to prevent proliferation of termites. Spraying chemicals at the infested areas were found to be ineffective form of treatment because it only repels termites instead of eliminating them. What's more, fumes of chemicals if inhaled may pose serious health risks.

The way Sentricon handles extermination is done with extra care. For one, the system uses a few grams of a chemical hexaflumuron within its bait stations, just enough to pursue elimination of termite colonies. It need not put unsightly holes throughout the house or grounds because it does not require drilling, digging or injections to facilitate treatment applications.

The great thing about Sentricon is that it uses treatment contraptions that are properly sealed and discreetly placed thus, safe to have around children or even pets. With Sentricon, homeowners need not worry about a thing because the system works and it guarantees safety not only in the home but the environment as well.

For more information on the Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System, call 819-1986 and 815-9273 or visit www.sentricon.com.

Birmingham Homes now in Antipolo City

THE ORIGINAL Birmingham Homes thrived in Cainta and San Mateo, Rizal. Now, a new cluster of Birmingham Homes is fast rising in Antipolo City.

The concept, however, remains the same: a subdivision mix of two-story house and lot packages and townhouse units, along with vacant lots, for middle-income families who want to move in as soon as possible, and design and build their own.

Effective product mix

The expansion, says developer Jaime I. Hernandez, president of Homeowners Development Corp., is proving that the product mix is effective and the market niche is continuing to be available.

Birmingham Homes located on residential M. L. Quezon Ave. Extension in Antipolo City, is a mere 30-minute drive from Edsa-Ortigas Avenue, Cubao, or Edsa Crossing on Shaw Boulevard where the big malls are.

The subdivision is about three kilometers to the famed Antipolo Church in the city's commercial district. Antipolo City, being on higher grounds, is cooler than Metro Manila all year round, even in summer. Thus, Birmingham Homes, with its urban yet rustic ambience, enjoys a cool breeze.

The city boasts of branches of Metro Manila's best private and exclusive grade schools and high schools. These are La Salle Antipolo, Assumption and recently, San Beda College, and a host of Montessori schools. Birmingham Homes residents won't really be far from bigger schools like Ateneo de Manila University, University of the Philippines, Miriam College, La Salle Greenhills, St. Paul Pasig and Poveda Learning Center for Girls.

BIRMINGHAM Homes' two-story, three-bedroom single-detached model

City facilities

They may also avail of modern city facilities like the Antipolo City General Hospital and Clinica Antipolo, although the city is some 45 minutes drive to Medical City in Mandaluyong and Cardinal Santos Hospital in San Juan. PLDT, Bayantel, Digitel and PT&T serve the telecommunications needs of Antipolo.

With all telecommunication facilities and modern conveniences available in Antipolo, being a Birmingham resident is like or better than living in Metro Manila. The Birmingham Homes office may be reached at 912-7731, e-mail at hdc@tri-isys.com or www.hdc-realestate.com.

CONSTRUCTION IN FULL BLAST
Construction works at FRC Super Mall—the newest project of Cuevasville Realty abd Development Corp.—are in full swing. The mall, which is scheduled to open soon, is expected to further stir up consumer activities in Imus, Bacoor, Cavite. The super mall sits on an 8,400-square-meter lot on Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Highway. It will feature first-class amenities.

Finding the right home for you

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(First of two parts)

BUILDING DREAMS

CAN I really afford a home?" "What is the right home for me?" "How will I look for one?" "Will I buy through a broker?" These are just the few questions that a jittery homebuyer would ask prior to searching and eventually buying a home. Most of these questions came from friends and readers who would want to start searching for their dream home. To make home buying process easier, I have written a 10-step process to aid the homebuyer in searching for that "perfect" home.

Step 1—Know what you need.

Any purchase action starts with a need. When we need something, we go through a process of looking for and eventually owning it. In buying a home, the first step starts with an honest assessment of what you really need. Include also the needs of the entire family so that it will be easy for you to arrive at the conclusion of what is most important for everybody.

Assessing what you need is a very important first step toward owning a home. Unfortunately, many homebuyers start by looking at homes and trying to fit the homes with what they need—only to end up with a home that they are not happy with. Discuss your needs with your family. Ask your children (and your mother-in-law, perhaps) on the study and living spaces that they would want in the new home. If the wife loves to cook, then a big kitchen is one of the top priorities. If the husband loves to tinker with the car every weekend, then a big garage with a space for the tools is important. If you are planning a house for a single person or for a young couple, then the needs may also be different. If the house will be for seniors, then certain provisions will have to be in place. This process of needs assessment would require many nights of discussion and planning.

Step 2—Know the type of home.

After assessing the required living spaces for you and the entire family, then you have to select the type of home that will satisfy these needs. You have many choices:

- **Single-detached home**—This home is where you have your own lot with your own house into it. You may even have enough space for a garden that you can cultivate in the future. On a specific location or subdivision, single-detached homes are generally the most expensive.
- **Duplex**—These are houses that come in two units bounded by a common firewall. It is a cross between a single-detached home and a town home. You may not be able to choose the color of the roof for the house for it has to be the same as your neighbor.
- **Townhouse**—Usually located in areas wherein the cost of land is high, these are built in multiple units beside each other and share a common firewall. Advantages include proximity to various infrastructures like malls and hospitals. Public transportation is usually near town homes.
- **Condominiums**—Located in prime areas, you enjoy absolute ownership of your unit and co-ownership of the land and the common areas. Facilities like pools, function rooms and the like are usually located in one of the floors. Condominiums are located near offices and shopping districts.

Step 3—Know your budget.

Knowing your budget requires a thorough analysis of your finances. If you are a family, then you might have to list down with your spouse your total income and expenditures to know how much you can afford for a home. If you are to take a loan from a bank, be realistic as to how much money you can allot for the monthly amortization. As a general rule, your monthly payments should be about 30 to 40 percent of your combined monthly gross income. You may have to give up some of the luxuries that you are used to so you can make those monthly payments.

Step 4—Consider paying in cash.

There are many homebuyers who pay in cash. There are individuals and couples who have saved enough money to be able to afford a home that they want. Some sell other properties including real estate to be able to raise enough money to get the real estate that they really want.

If you can pay it in cash, then go ahead and do it. If not, then you have the option of borrowing from a bank or a financial institution.

E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacifc.net.ph.

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Election spending boosts SMC sales

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. reported a 16-percent growth in net profits during the first two months of the year to over P1 billion compared with the P918 million earned during the same period last year.

The increase was buoyed by its local beverage business.

In its disclosure to the stock exchange, SMC said net sales revenues, including that of subsidiaries from January to February, grew 14 percent to P24.4 billion.

Corporate volume growth was also stronger by 5 percent due to higher trade turnovers of its beverage business.

Consolidated volume growth of San Miguel's beverage business recorded a 13-percent year-on-year expansion. Volumes for SMC's beer division grew roughly 30 percent.

Operating income meanwhile reached P2 billion or 32 percent higher against last year's P1.5 billion.

The first two-month profits already represent 80 percent of SMC's first quarter earnings in 2003.

"Clearly it is evident that the company is well poised to take advantage of additional consumer spending given an election year. With programs and systems in place, the company is well positioned to sustain its growth momentum," SMC said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

SM reports 8-percent hike in net profits

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SY

BOOSTED by its mall operations, SM Prime Holdings Inc. of mall tycoon Henry Sy reported its net profits grew more than 8 percent to P4.2 billion last year from P3.86 billion in 2002.

In its disclosure to the stock exchange, SM Prime said total revenues, including those of its subsidiaries, expanded almost 10 percent last year to P8.8 billion from P8.01 billion in 2002.

The sustained performance of its mall and food court leasing, cinemas and amusement operations drove up revenues, the mall operator said.

Rent was higher by 11.3 percent to P6.98 billion in 2003 from P6.27 billion in 2002 while cinema revenues rose 7 percent to P1.34 billion.

SM Prime said the full operations of SM City Bicutan and SM City Cagayan de Oro—which were opened in late 2002—contributed to the growth last year.

Newly opened malls, namely in Lucena in Quezon province, Baguio City and Marilao in Bulacan which were opened in late 2003 also chipped in into the revenue stream.

Adding to the growth were improvements in SM City North Edsa and the opening of SM City Pampanga's annex building.

Operating expenses however grew 10 percent due to the costs of running the three newly opened malls and the full operations of Bicutan and Cagayan de Oro malls.

Higher interest income and the decline in interest expense also drove up other income by 91 percent.

Analysts meanwhile said there were no surprises with SM Prime's income results.

"It is within our expectations. I expected income at P4.18 billion. This year I expect their earnings to grow by around 10 percent to P4.6 billion due to the additional mall space from Lucena, Marilao and Baguio and the contribution from same store sales," Alfred Dy, vice president for equity research at Philippine Equity Partners Inc., said.

SM Prime now operates 17 malls nationwide with a total gross floor area amounting to 2.31 million square meters.

It continues to pursue expansion plans within the next five years. It plans to open SM City Dasmariñas in Cavite, SM Batangas and SM City Fairview annex this year.

Under construction are SM City San Lazaro, SM City Molino, SM City Valenzuela, and SM Mall of Asia. By 2005, total gross floor area of SM Prime is expected to reach 2.8 million square meters.

RCBC eyes sale of non-performing loans to US investment banker

YUCHENGCO-LED Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) is studying the sale of its pool of soured loans to US investment banker Lehman Brothers in efforts to clean up its idle assets.

Bank vice chair Cesar Virata said it has already shown the US investment bank its portfolio and is awaiting Lehman's evaluation which will set a price for the loans.

Virata also said Lehman is still waiting for its board's nod on the loan sale.

A source from the investment bank confirmed they are in talks with the bank but declined to comment further.

RCBC earlier said it was studying to unload some P7 billion worth of non-performing loans to Lehman.

Industry observers noted that Lehman, which has been actively participating in banks' efforts to sell their bad assets after the financial crisis, has again been eyeing the industry's idle assets after the passage of the special purpose vehicle law last year.

SPVs are tasked to buy idle assets at a discount and help manage the assets in order to sell it later for profit.

As of mid-December, RCBC's non-performing loans stood at P15.8 billion or 14.3 percent of its loans. Last year, it planned to sell P5 billion in bad loans to foreign investors.

Those invited to look at the bank's portfolio were Colony Capital for idle properties, Lehman for both idle loans and properties and Credit Suisse First Boston for bad loans only. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PSE asks SEC to relax reporting rule

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) is asking the corporate watchdog to relax a rule that will allow directors and officers of listed companies to extend reporting about transactions involving buying and selling of shares.

Under PSE's present rules, issuers or listed companies must disclose the direct and indirect ownership of its directors and principal officers of shares held in that company within two trading days.

Those who fail to comply are fined P50,000.

The PSE recommended that disclosure be instead made in five days which would allow issuers to "seasonably comply" with the rule. This is to make it at par with other exchanges in Asia.

In Kuala Lumpur for instance, directors must disclose any buying or selling of shares within seven days from acquisition. Under Jakarta Stock Exchange rules, ownership must be disclosed not later than 10 days. In Australia and Hong Kong, disclosure is done within five days from the transaction date.

Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Lilia Bautista said they will review the proposal and said a five-day rule is "reasonable." *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Stocks dip on politics

From page B1

"As the political season heats up, investors continue to shy away from the market," Del Castillo said.

The Philippines is going to the polls on May 10 to elect a president, a vice president and some 17,000 other posts ranging from senator to town councilor. *Reuters*

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 29, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17.25	17	17.25	90,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	43	43	713,800
China Banking Corp.	670	670	670	670	500
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38.5	38.5	38	38	1,500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.54	0.56	0.54	0.56	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	24	24.25	23.5	24	469,500
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.25	23	23	9,100
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	15.75	16.25	15.75	16.25	1,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	667,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1445	1450	1445	1450	950
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.5	18	17.5	18	169,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.61	0.61	2,360,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	795	790	795	54,400
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.62	1.66	4,960,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	905	910	905	905	26,560
Ivantage Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	2,530,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	72,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.75	16.75	16	16	78,900
Manila Electric Co. B	25	25	24.75	25	113,600
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	339,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3	3	3	3	400,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	40,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3	3	3	3	5,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.95	560,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	10,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc	28	28	28	28	50,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.5	16.5	1,364,000
RFM Corp.	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.63	20,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56.5	56	56.5	31,200
San Miguel Corp. B	69	69.5	69	69.5	25,000
Universal Robina Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,498,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	984,000
APC Group Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	600,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	2,010,000
Basic Consolidated Inc	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	300,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	300,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	20	20	19.75	19.75	248,200
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	1	1	0.99	1	2,135,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	38,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	14	14	31,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	69,020,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.22	170,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	2,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	600,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	1,700,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	40,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.75	18.5	17.75	18.5	465,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.9	4.95	3,342,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	1,190,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	2,250,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	10,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	520,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.78	1.78	101,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	4,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,656,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	410,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	340,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	10,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0026	0.0024	0.0026	4,015,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000

DISCLOSURES

OMICO Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 30, 9 a.m. at the Dasmariñas/Magallanes/San Lorenzo Function Rooms of Makati Sports Club. Only stockholders of record as of March 26 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SAN Miguel Pure Foods Co. Inc. denied having any information that could explain the 40-percent decrease in its share price that dropped from P70 to P42 each.

* * *

CITYSTATE Savings Bank Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 25, 2 p.m. at the 20/F of Citystate Centre Building, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of April 16 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Ayala Corp.** were Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Ariston Estrada Jr., Mercedita Nolledo, Masakazu Okabayashi and Meneleo Carlos Jr. The company also declared a 20-percent stock dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of April 16 and will be payable on or before May 12.

* * *

UNION Bank of the Philippines set April 9 as record date for its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28 at 2 p.m.

* * *

MEGAWORLD Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 18, 9 a.m. at the Eastwood City Information Centre, Quezon City. Stockholders of record as of April 16 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. Robert Zulkoski resigned as director of the company. Kishore Moorjani was elected to replace him.

* * *

PART of the rental payments for the account of **Ever Gotesco Resources Holdings Inc.** and its subsidiary, Gotesco Tyan Ming Development Inc., that were garnished by a Manila court were released after the court approved the compromise agreement between the plaintiff, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the defendants, including Orient Commercial Banking Corp.

* * *

FIRST Metro Investment Corp. will reduce the number of its directors from eleven to nine.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 450 of its own shares at P1.32 each.

* * *

PETER Lim resigned as director of **Philippine Bank of Communications.**
Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

March 29, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.824063	1.000000	56.4220
Japan	Yen	0.007782	0.009444	0.5328
United Kingdom	Pound	1.496251	1.815700	102.4454
Hongkong	Dollar	0.105691	0.128256	7.2365
Switzerland	Franc	0.641793	0.778816	43.9424
Canada	Dollar	0.625000	0.758438	42.7926
Singapore	Dollar	0.487236	0.591261	33.3601
Australia	Dollar	0.612458	0.743218	41.9338
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.185900	2.652590	149.6644
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.219745	0.266660	15.0455
Brunei	Dollar	0.485800	0.589518	33.2618
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000096	0.000116	0.0065
Thailand	Baht	0.020857	0.025310	1.4280
UAE	Dirham	0.224369	0.272272	15.3621
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.213500	68.4681
Argentina	Peso	0.286382	0.347524	19.6080
Brazil	Real	0.280771	0.340716	19.2239
Denmark	Kroner	0.134308	0.162983	9.1958
India	Rupee	0.018551	0.022512	1.2702
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216808	0.263193	14.8499
Mexico	New Peso	0.074140	0.089969	5.0762
New Zealand	Dollar	0.534411	0.648508	36.5901
Norway	Kroner	0.118519	0.143823	8.1148
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014422	0.017501	0.9874
South Africa	Rand	0.125875	0.152749	8.6184
Korea	Won	0.000712	0.000864	0.0487
Sweden	Kroner	0.107984	0.131038	7.3934
Syria	Pound	0.018677	0.022665	1.2788
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Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000430	0.000522	0.0295

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QUEZON CITY

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•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

DIAJADE PAWNSHOP
LAS PINAS
METRO MANILA
Will have its auction sale on April 06, 2004. All unredeemed pledges during the month of November 01-30, 2003. Diajade Br.II-11:30 am
Sons of J. Lanuza-Auctioneer

Nuestra-Damus Pawnshop
Makati City
Auction Sale on April 06, 2004 all unredeemed pledges during the month of November 01-30, 2003. Nuestra Br. II 9:30am; Nuestra Br. I 10:30am; Damus Pawnshop-12:30pm; Nuestra Br. IX - 3:00pm.
Sons of J. Lanuza - Auctioneer.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late RIZALINO V. FRIAS, JR an extrajudicial deed of partition and settlement among heirs with waiver of rights was executed and denominated as per Doc. No. 271; Page No. 55; Book No. 398; Series of 2004 Notarized by Lucila M. Lawas of Yutok Pasig City
(PDI-Mar.16, 23 & 30, 2004)

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ON ITS 14TH STRAIGHT YEAR

Sixth-Grade Scholasticans to stage Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at CCP

THE CURTAIN opens anew for the annual stage presentation of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by the St. Scholastica's College (Manila) Grade School Department on 31 March 2004, 6 pm, at the Main Theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Already in its 14th year of production, the play showcases the talents of the Scholastican girls, sporting painted fake beards and Elizabethan costumes, as they bring to life the Bard's tale of love, magic spells, elves and dancing fairies set in an enchanted forest.

Former casts and production staff members of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" from way back its maiden offering in 1990 are cordially invited to come and watch the Shakespearian play directed by CCP Gawad-Awardee, Prof. Naty Crame-Rogers; artistic director and consultant for the Grade School Department's Children and Teachers' Theater, St. Scholastica's College, Manila.

This year's production is made even more special as it will be a farewell tribute to the woman who started the staging of the play more than a decade ago, and since then opened a new learning experience through theater and drama for countless young students.

MS. FLORINA F. Castillo, St. Scholastica's College Grade School principal, will bid goodbye after serving for more than 36 years.

"Just as those of you for whom' A Midsummer Night's Dream' is one last production before you leave Grade School, so it is for me," she said in a message to her students, most of whom have grown watching older schoolmates perform in past productions through the years.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" tells the story of how the King and Queen of the fairy world, Oberon and Titania, and their mischievous messenger, Puck, bring about a merry mix-up among mortals -the lovers Lysander and Hermia, and Demetrius and Helena, and Bottom, a common folk. In the end, however, order is restored by the ruler Duke Theseus and his bride Hippolyta.

Admission is free and open to the public. For details and ticket reservations contact Ms. Sally Emaas, Tel. No. 5247686 loc 470.

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12:00 noon
Day before publication

There is a time and a season for everything.
A time to be born and a time to die...
A time to weep and a time to mourn.
A time to laugh and a time to dance.
God made everything beautiful in its time.
Ecclesiastes 3:1,2,4 and 11

Manny T.Y. Ang
(Ang Tiao Yong)

Peacefully joined his Creator
on March 28, 2004 at the age of 59.

His cremains lie in state beginning March 29, 2004 at the Capilla del Señor and Capilla dela Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Mc Kinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Manny's ashes will be interred in the Columbarium of Santuario de San Antonio after the celebration of a Farewell Mass at the main church one o'clock in the afternoon of April 2, 2004.

His bereaved family, relatives and friends who will miss Manny's zest for life be it of triumph, trial or tribulation, fidelity to kith and kin, and an uncommon dedication to his craft, request all pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Message of Thanks

Our thanks to all those
who offered masses, novenas and prayers;
sent flowers and messages of sympathy;
kept vigil and attended the funeral rites;
and who in countless ways condoled with, helped
and comforted us in our moment of grief.
Thank you.

From the family of the late

TELESFORO A. VEA

LEONIDES RAMOS LAZO

of BF Homes, Las Piñas
and San Carlos, Pangasinan

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on March 26, 2004 at the age of 79.

He is preceeded in death by his wife of 56 years **Angelina Gamboa Cruz**. He is survived by her children **Myrna & Melencio Cruz Jr., Charito & Dennis Pecson, Mahlou & Romy delos Santos, Adora & Allan Valencia, Angie & Vicente Cruz Jr. and Ike & Winnie Lazo**, beloved grandchildren, brothers and sisters-in-law.

His body lies in state at Solace 2 Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City. Date & time to be announced at later date.

"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."
Matthew 11:30

GAUDENCIO A. GUERRERO

of San Juan, Ilocos Sur; Dingras, Ilocos Norte & Mandaluyong

Former Philippine Airlines Maintenance & Engineering Department Manager
Former Orient Airlines Association Director – Technical Affairs
Former Odyssey Music Store Technical Assistant for Special Projects

Peacefully joined our Creator
on March 28, 2004 at the age of 79.

His beloved wife **NIEVES** (nee Jamias); daughters **CYNTHIA & GIGI**; sons **DANILO & SAMMY**; children-in-law, grandchildren and other relatives request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Loyola Memorial (Guadalupe) Chapel C. Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park-Marikina on April 1, 2004 following an 8:00 a.m. funeral Mass at Chapel C.

ROSARIO VALDES GUERRERO

...Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on March 28, 2004 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved husband **Francisco**; children **Armando, Eduardo**; daughters-in-law **Maribel & Rose**; grandchildren **Ivan, Alan, Lia, Jaime** and **Angelo**, other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on April 2, 2004 at the Funeraria Paz at 10:00 a.m. after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Arlington Memorial Chapels.

DEATH NOTICES

EMILIA YANGO DE JESUS

January 6, 1923 - March 27, 2004

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels (Felicidad), 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 3, 2004, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

* * *

ROSALINDA C. AGUINALDO

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on 27th March 2004.

Her ashes lie in state at Mount Carmel Shrine Mortuary, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be today, March 30, 2004 after the 9 o'clock a.m. funeral mass at Mt. Carmel Shrine.

* * *

RUBEN QUINTO BELTRAN

Joined his Creator on March 27, 2004

Friends and family are invited to participate in Holy Mass every evening at Funeraria Paz Araneta Ave., Quezon City. A memorial tribute to celebrate his birthday will be held after the mass on the 29th of March.

There will be a mass on the 31st of March at 7:00 a.m., thereafter, interment will be at Eternal Garden Quezon City.

* * *

BENJAMIN M. MARTINEZ

Died on March 26, 2004

His body lies in state at Chapel Q, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati.

Interment will be on Thursday, April 1, 2004 at La Loma Cemetery, Caloocan after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Chapel Q.

VENERANDA VIRTUCIO VDA. DE BERMUDEZ

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 23, 2004 .

Interment will be on Wednesday March 31, 2004 at the Nuestra Sra. de Sto. Rosario Cemetery, Cabuyao, Laguna after the 3:00 PM Mass at St. Polycarp Parish Church, Cabuyao, Laguna.

* * *

DR. BENJAMIN M. LIMSON

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 26, 2004.

His body lies in state at Chapel Q, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Friday, April 2, 2004 at Manila Memorial Park Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

* * *

LUCIANO CO SIY

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 26, 2004.

His remains lie in state at the Jacinto Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park).

Cremation will be on Wednesday, March 31, 2004 at Manila Memorial Park Crematorium after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

* * *

ARACELI BARREDO YLAGAN

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 26, 2004.

Her remains lie in state at Hope Chapel of Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be brought to Odiongan, Romblon on Monday, March 29, 2004.

Interment will be on April 2, 2004, Friday 8:00 A.M. at Odiongan, Romblon.

CLASSIFIEDS

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance

March 29, 2004

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon Operation and Maintenance invites interested Filipino contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects/undertaking

Project No.	Contract Code/ Title	Location	Duration	Approved Budget for the Contract	Source of Budget
1	Trans-04-RWPSGA-04 Replacement of Gumaca-Atimonan 69kV Wood Pole Structures to Steel Poles	Quezon Province	75 working days	Php 7,545,462.96	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)
2	Trans-04-RWPSGA-05 Replacement of Gumaca-Pitogo 69kV Wood Pole Structures to Steel Poles	Quezon Province	80 working days	Php 9,309,137.19	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)
3	Trans-04-RWPSGA-04 Replacement of Maguilayan-Tagkawayan 69kV Wood Pole Structures to Steel Poles	Quezon Province	90 working days	Php 13,452,613.85	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)

Prospective bidders must have at least completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid, i.e., contract involving supply and installation of steel pole transmission lines/structures (rated 69kilovolts and above) which value is at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract.

(Application is also open to a joint venture of Filipino and foreign contractors with PCAB Special License for this project)

License Particular	At least "Category B, Specialties"
Registration Particular	At least "Medium A, Electrical Works" (Power Transmission and Distribution)

Applications for Eligibility (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by NTC in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding, and shall be subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.

Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance starting **March 30, 2004 up to April 19, 2004** at the Regional Contracts Management Office, Administration Division, NTC, South Luzon Operation and Maintenance, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, Telefax No. 520-8213 and E-mail Address (grlistano@transco.ph) upon presentation of Letter of Intent, original PCAB License and payment of a non-refundable fee of P800.00 per copy per project.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before 10:00 A.M. of **April 20, 2004** which shall be submitted at the office address mentioned above. Opening and Eligibility Screening shall be held on the same date and time specified. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.

NTC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communication should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address. ***(Note: This invitation was based on Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).***

(Sgd.) G. R. LISTANO
Dept. Manager, PSMD-North and
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – March 30, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Ilocos Sur
VIGAN CITY

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

1. The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Vigan City, Republic of the Philippines, has received a grant from Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional (AECI) towards the cost of the Raois-Mira Hills Parallel Transmission Line Project under the Integrated Water Supply and Management System for Vigan City and intends to apply the proceeds of this grant to eligible payment under the contract, for which the Invitation for Prequalification and to Bid is issued.
2. The City of Vigan hereinafter referred to as the "Owner" intends to prequalify contractors for the construction of:

Name of Project	Proposed Additional Water Supply System for the Raois-Mira Hills Parallel Transmission Line Project
Location	City of Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Contract Duration	60 Calendar Days
Scope of Work	Furnishing of equipment, materials, labor and tools for the complete Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Raois Water Pumping Stations 1 and 2 including complete supply and installation of replacement electromechanical equipment

Approved Budget for Contract : P7,236,658.61

3. Prequalification is open to firms and voluntarily joint ventures.
Schedule of application for prequalification and bidding as follows:

a. Submission of Letter of Intent and Issuance of Prequalification Documents	April 12 to 15, 2004 upon payment of non-refundable amount of P100.00
b. Submission of Duly Accomplished Prequalification Documents	Not later than 5:00 PM April 22, 2004
c. Issuance of Plans/Bid Documents to Prequalified Bidders	May 6-10, 2004 upon payment of non-refundable amount of P5,000.00
d. Site Visit/Bid Conference	Site Visit 10 a.m./Pre-bid Conference 2:00 p.m. on May 17, 2004
e. Submission/Opening of Bids	Not later than 3:00 p.m. May 31, 2004 at Bidding Room, Bids and Awards Committee, Vigan City

For issuance of Bidders Prequalification Form and Plans/Bid Documents, you may contact:

The City Planning and Development Officer
City Hall, Vigan City
Tel. No. (077) 722-8772 Local 105

The City of Vigan reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive defects or formality therein, to accept bids considered responsive and most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO P. RANCHES, JR.
City Vice Mayor
Acting Chairman, Steering Committee
Spanish Assisted Projects in Vigan City

(PDI–March 28 & 30 2004)

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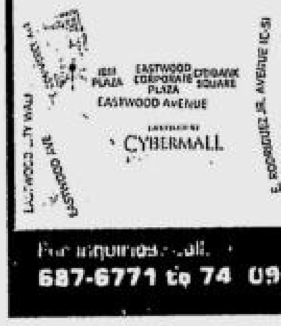

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY **ARTS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ● SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

You may not be losing pounds but inches

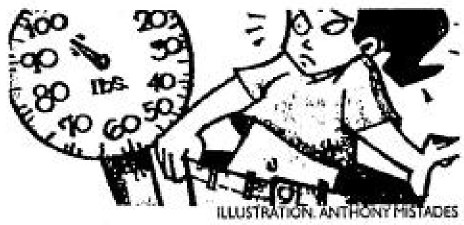

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY PISTADES

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

IT'S not easy to determine how many calories you burn in yoga or Pilates since the intensity of the class depends on the exercises being done and the strength levels of participants.

In general, a 130-pound person would burn approximately 260 calories an hour for a light to moderate Pilates mat-class and 236 calories for a yoga class. "Intense" Pilates would burn approximately 346 calories while an intense yoga class would burn about 400 calories per hour.

Your weight helps determine how many calories you burn (the more you weigh, the more calories you burn), so use the following formula: Divide the number of calories burned by 130 pounds. Multiply the answer by your weight in pounds.

For example, divide 260 calories by 130 pounds. The answer is 2 calories per pound. Multiply that by 110 pounds. The answer is 220 calories.

Weight loss vs inch loss

All this talk about calories leads to a frequently asked question: Can yoga or Pilates help you lose weight? Definitely it can as part of a total program that includes watching what you eat and doing cardio exercise.

For weight loss, you want to burn 1,000-2,000 calories a week through exercise. If you are doing no other form of exercise except for twice a week of moderate Pilates, burning 520 calories a week would not be enough and you would have to add an aerobic exercise or a sport like badminton or tennis. However, if you are doing three Ashtanga classes (an intense form of yoga) a week that are one-and-a-half hours long (the length of most yoga classes), then the caloric burn of 1,800 calories is enough to help you lose weight.

But beyond weight loss, yoga and Pilates have a greater impact on your appearance because of the inches you lose from the firming and toning

YOU/ C3

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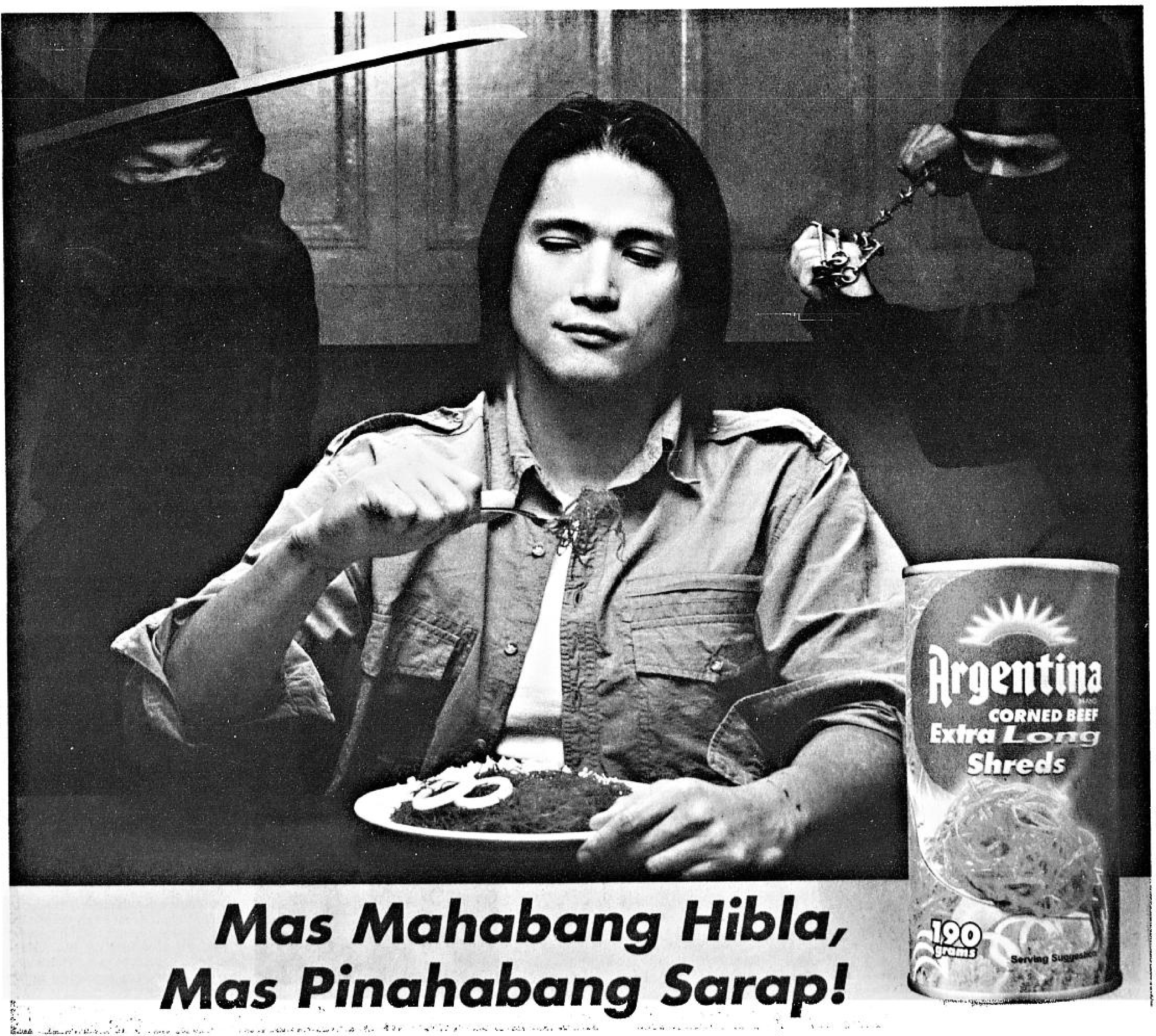


Mas Mahabang Hibla,
Mas Pinahabang Sarap!

IT'S body watching at Bondi Beach for Rajo Laurel, Anton San Diego, Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Ipe Cruz

IT'S break time from our exciting Adidas amazing race. Beia Formoso, Millet Mananquil, Gabe and Chelo Formoso, and Ethel Timbol at The Rocks

MEG magazine editor in chief Pierra Calasanz, Ces Drilon, Jen Verrano and Toni Abad

THE ADIDAS GANG. Toti Wong, Keren Pascual, Oona Mapua and Andrew Garcia

OUR super-friendly PAL crew on our way home from Sydney: flight attendant Millie de la Rama Lucero; our fun Ilonggo purser, Sonny Lanza; Mila Iluscupides and Jeff Briones

PAL'S terrific crew: flight stewards Rene Herrera, Ruperto Enzage, flight purser Jojo Grau, and the only rose among the thorns, flight attendant Jean Villanueva

Famous voyage and equally famous voyagers

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by
Alex Van Hagen
on Kodak Max

YOU have to be famous, beautiful and full of life, *palanggas*, to join the Famous, The Voyage Party. Well that gent with the magic wand, prince of PR and workaholic personality, **Keren Pascual**, took us on the sixth Famous journey (Famous 6!) to the land Down Under, specifically Sydney, Australia.

With forever sporty Adidas on the helm, it was a success.

Unlike the others, **Anton San Diego** and I took our very own Philippine Airlines, *naturellement*, knowing the friendly crew will go out of their way to give the best service and most comfort.

"Famous 6!" was a fabulous adventure. We were divided into groups for the fun Adidas Amazing Race where teams had to find their way to the Orient Hotel at The Rocks, both rich in history. The Rocks is one of the most visited places in Sydney and the Orient its oldest hotel.

The first team was led by that model of a hundred beautiful faces, **Bianca Valerio**; top fashion designer, spitfire **Rajo Laurel**; our dahling, irrepressible INQUIRER columnist, Sea Princess **Tessa Prieto-Valdes**; sloe-eyed beauty, brains and talent, **Toni Abad** of Essenses; INQUIRER's fun contributor **Beia Formoso**; and good-looking **Andrew Garcia** of Adidas, natch.

CLARINS tanning oil has Brent Javier covered.

BIANCA Valerio wears the colors of Paradise Mango Rum Liqueur.

WONDERLAND
SYDNEY
OUTBACK RESTAURANT
IN WONDERLAND, where the wild things are

Go-getting team

Team Performance consisted of the go-getters. Led by dancing queen, brilliant **Jennie Verrano** of the popular Far East Travel Agency, the team had Tatler editor Anton San Diego; television host nonpareil **Ces Drilon**; Cosmopolitan fashion editor **Donna Cuna-Pita**; Meg magazine editor **Pierra Calasanz** and model **Raya Mananquil**.

The group of basketball hunks was led by cutiepie **DJ Jon Herrera**, and included Bubble Boy, **Ipe Cruz**; women's fantasy "It" boy, **Borgy Manotoc**; Cosmo hunk **Brent Javier**; triathlete leggy beauty **Oona Mapua**; and *palangga* Joel Mercado, writer/producer at ABS-CBN.

Team Soccker, which kicked all our butts, was led by half-Spanish model **Mikee Carreon**, with good-looking models **Ton Lao** and **Tirso Garcia**; and the husband-and-wife photography team, **Xander** and **Cheryll Angeles**, plus Adidas' multifaceted personality, **Toti Wong**.

The "divas" of Team Originals were Philippine Star Lifestyle mega editor **Millet Mananquil**; her husband and a journalist himself, **Robert Mananquil**; *moi* with our boss of bosses, observant **Chelo Formoso**, Lifestyle editor of INQUIRER, and her adorable son **Gabe**; Manila Bulletin Lifestyle editor, my true *palangga*, **Ethel Timbol**; and *naturellement*, the Famous guru himself, Keren Pascual.

TESSA Prieto-Valdes holds the popular Keiko Mecheri perfume.

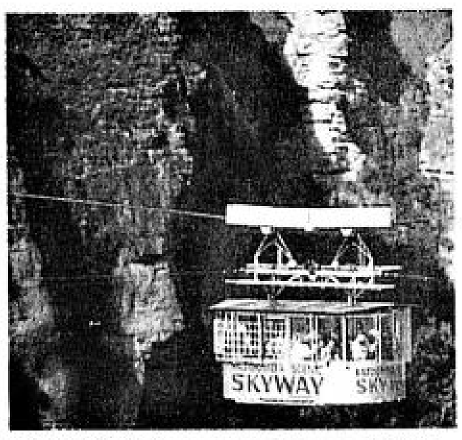
RAYA gets the magnetic beat from Escada.

Bargain hunting

After the race, we were off to The Rock's Sunday flea market then to the Cockle Bay Wharf (with a fabulous view of Darling Harbour) for dinner at Wagamama, a hip Japanese fusion resto.

WORKASONIC ace photographer Xander Angeles in action

BORGY Manotoc, in an Adidas basketball top, takes a sip of the cool Paradise Mango Rum.



THE SCENIC Skyway tour gives enchanting views of the Three Sisters and the Blue Mountain.

Toni Abad gave away fabulous Escada Magnetic Beat gift packs.

We went on a full city tour the next day, going from Harbour Bridge to Harry's Café de Wheels, famous for the best original Aussie pies. *Moi*, Anton, Tessa, Rajo, Keren and Ethel experienced the luxury of the legendary W. Hotel, where actor **Russell Crowe** lives.

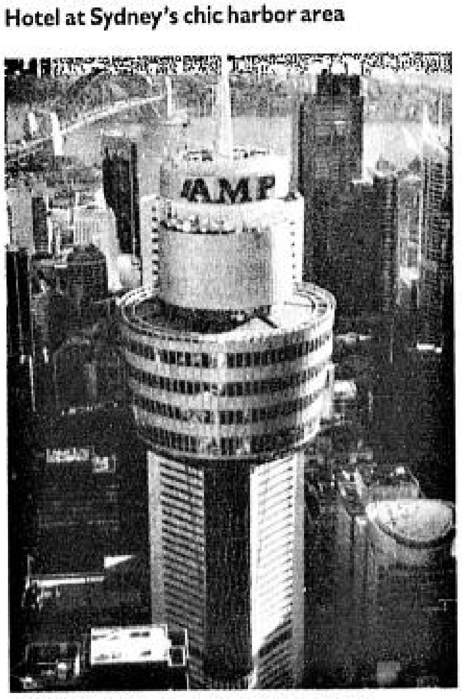
Lunch was onboard a Captain Cook's Cruise boat that took us around the harbor in real style, *palanggas*. We splashed ourselves with skin-care products from my favorite brand, Clarins, to protect us from Sydney's hot-hot sun.

We also had cold bottles of yummy and so refreshing Paradise Mango Rum Liqueur. The delicious drink is made from the Philippines' freshest mangoes and can be used for yummy cocktails and exotic dishes. It's a must-have drink on hot days and nights, *palanggas*.

Next stop was the famous Bondi Beach, through the fun Oxford Street and naughty King's Cross. Bondi is probably the most famous beach in Sydney. Only Anton and a couple of male models who pumped iron in Manille weeks before the trip dared to show off their bods. We slathered on ourselves tons of Malibu High Protection Lotion and Clarins sunblock lotion.

Dinner was at the trendy Little Saigon, and we were garbed in Adidas Sport from head to toe, *palanggas*.

THE FABULOUS interior of the renowned W. Hotel at Sydney's chic harbor area



AMP TOWER, the tallest building in Australia, where we had a super dinner on our last day in Sydney

'American Idol' wannabes

On day three we drove to the Blue Mountains, with some of us behaving like frustrated contestants on the TV show "American Idol" on the way there. Toni Abad, Rajo Laurel, Ipe Cruz, Anton San Diego, Bianca Valerio and Toti Wang impressed everyone with their singing, even the bus driver.

Then it was on to Wonderland, where we had fun feeding the cute koalas and kangaroos, and seeing the rest of Australia's wildlife. On the way home, we stopped at Westfield Mall, the biggest in Sydney. Keren, Anton, myself and a couple of others didn't buy a thing. But, of course, Tessa had tons of shopping bags, mostly for her children.

We visited the very impressive Olympic Stadium. We all pretended to be athletes preparing for a competition, with Adidas watches giving us perfect timing.

Without batting an eyelash, the Adidas watches were a tremendous hit, especially the Climacool model for the dudes and the colorful YS2 for the women.

Evening was free. TV host Ces, Bianca and Jen decided to bring to their rooms La Prairie products from Essenses, an exotic skincare product with a caviar Veteran base.

On the last day, most of us went to the Queen Victoria Building or QVB, considered "most beautiful shopping center in the world," for more shopping. Others went back to Bondi Beach, while some got tickets to Broadway's "Lion King" at the Capitol Theater.

Towering launch

We had dinner at the AMP Tower Revolving Restaurant for the launch of Keiko Mecheri, an extensive perfume line for men and women available at Barney's and Neiman Marcus in the States. The resto smelled beautifully of Mecheri, dahling. Some lucky guys got a fab bonus when Toni Abad gave out super Clarins Men gift packs.

After dinner, we headed for the popular, The Establishment, one of my favorite clubs in Sydney—great sounds, beautiful people.

Next day I boarded my PAL flight for Manille with a heavy heart. But PAL's hospitality and endless amenities made it easier to say, "Goodbye, Sydney."

The consolation, *palanggas*, is we are looking forward to Famous Voyage 7.

You may. . .

From page C1

effect on the muscles. It is not uncommon to require a smaller size of clothes while still your weight seemingly remains unchanged.

Flatter abs

No doubt, Pilates has the most number of exercises that focus on the abs, waist and trunk. Almost every variation you can think of for the abs is offered in Pilates.

If abdominal and waist whittling is what you are looking for, Pilates is the ticket for you. This is not to say that yoga will not strengthen your abs and trunk. It will but Pilates just has much more focus on that area.

Mat vs machine

This has nothing to do with the comparison of yoga and Pilates, but I just want to mention the difference between mat- and machine-based Pilates because people ask about it.

If Pilates is the only form of muscle toning you do, then a combination of both mat- and machine-based would be ideal.

Pilates machines offer more resistance and types of exercise for the arms and legs (especially the upper body) than mat-based classes. But abdominal exercises in mat Pilates are usually harder than the machine-based because the equipment supports the legs during exercises that involve leg raises.

By mixing mat and machine Pilates, you get a more total muscle-strengthening program. If you do weights or yoga, mat Pilates will be sufficient and you won't need to add Pilates machine exercises.

Best of both worlds

In my opinion, doing both yoga and Pilates means getting the best of both worlds. However, if you have to choose only one, go for yoga if you want more flexibility, strength in the upper and lower body, mental concentration, relaxation and stress relief. Choose Pilates if your goal is a more defined midsection as well as long and lean muscles.

Some centers offer hybrid classes called "Yogalates" or "Yogilates" that combine both systems. This is a good option for those who are pressed for time. But I still find that doing yoga and Pilates separately allows you to more fully experience and reap the benefits that each form of exercise has to offer.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

Want to be Untouchable?

These days, tap water has become Public Enemy # 1 for many Filipino families. Eliot Ness, Bonnie and Clyde, and Al Capone are no match for amoebiasis, typhoid, and cholera. These water-based gangsters pack a wallop, and the worst thing is, they lurk right in your kitchen. It's no wonder that the bottled water aisle in your supermarket resembles an arsenal. Choose your weapon against your kitchen thugs: mineral, distilled, or sparkling water?

But choosing the right kind of bottled water for the whole family is tough business, too. A bottle of water means different things for different people. The trick is to find the one best for you and your family's lifestyle.

Lola needs distilled water. Elderlies like her are susceptible to bacteria present in drinking water, such as protozoa and viruses, because of her age-weakened immune system.

Kuya needs lots of water. An hour-long basketball game can lose him as much as six cups of fluid and lots of minerals and salt, which might cause dehydration. Mineral water is best for him.

What's best for *Kuya*, however, may not be safe for Baby. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that baby's drinking water be free from ammonia, nitrates, heavy metals, and contain very small amounts of sodium since these can lead to illness.

There are other factors to consider when looking for your weapon-of-choice. The WHO says that it is reasonable to assume that bottled water may still have microorganisms from the filling and storage process, but since these microorganisms are harmless for healthy adults, they are safe for the family's consumption. However, infants need a higher level of safety when it comes to their water, because their underdeveloped immune systems cannot fight these microorganisms. If you buy bottled water for baby, the WHO recommends that you should still sterilize it by boiling, as bottled water isn't sterile. The Environmental Protection Agency says that the disinfection process used on bottled water is not as effective as sterilization. With distilled water, infants are still at risk from the bacteria that may be introduced during the refilling process.

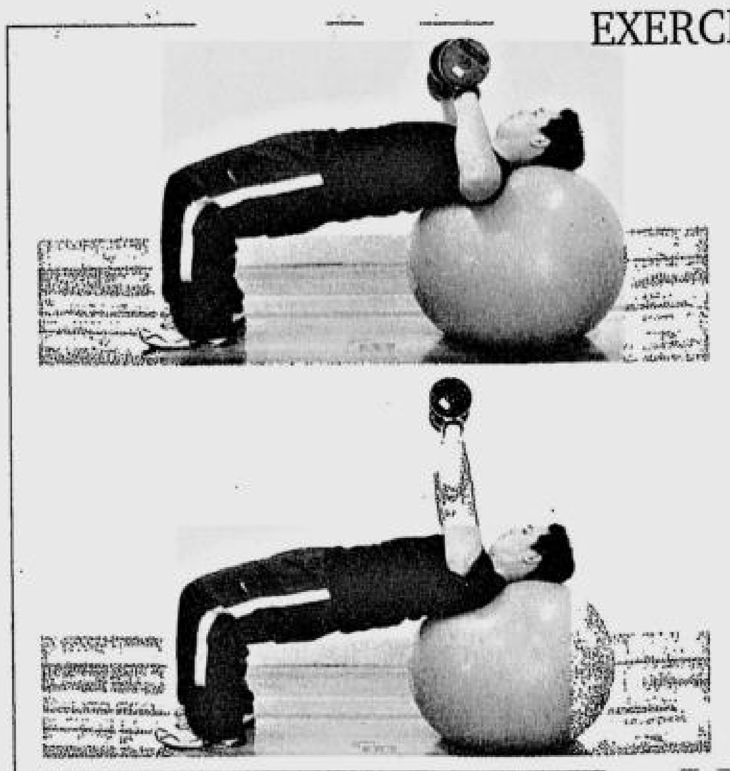
Sterilized water is the safest option for babies. Like Al Capone thrown in jail and cut off from his gang, sterilized water is free from all bacteria, viruses, fungi and any other harmful micro-organisms. This is why the American Academy of Pediatrics, the WHO, and the USDA recommends sterilized water for all of baby's needs, whether in formula preparation, cereals, or juice.

Moreover, sterilized water is the safest choice for people with compromised immune systems, such as people with recent illness or surgery, the elderly, children, and infants.

You don't have to act like the "Untouchables" and take a BB Gun to your tap. If you choose the right bottled water, not even a bacterial Bonnie and Clyde will stand a chance against your defenses.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Chest press on stability ball



THIS exercise strengthens the chest, "core" muscles (abs, trunk, lower back) as well as the buttocks and hamstrings.

Equipment:

Stability ball, dumbbells. A gym bench can be used as a substitute for the ball.

Exercise technique:

1. Start by sitting on the ball with the dumbbells held close to your chest, your arms bent (not shown).
2. Move your feet forward as you simultaneously lower your upper body until you are in a table-top position with your buttocks in line with your shoulders.
3. Inhale and lower the dumbbells to chest level with palms facing forward. This is your starting position.
4. Exhale and contract chest muscles to bring dumbbells upward.
5. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. This is an exercise that should only be attempted by someone experienced in using a stability ball.
2. To protect yourself, use a ball that is anti-burst, meaning a ball that will deflate slowly if punctured and will not suddenly collapse under you.
3. Use a reasonable amount of weight. This exercise is not meant for very heavy weights. Emphasis is on control and challenge of the core.
4. Keep your buttocks contracted so hips stay level with the shoulders.
5. When you bring dumbbells up, keep your shoulder blades slightly contracted against the ball so your chest does not concave. Lower the dumbbells with control.

Repetitions:

Do 12-15 repetitions, one or two sets.

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From now until April 8, 2004, myGlobe's scorching summer promo MMS Escapade lets mobile shutter bugs win hot weekly prizes such as gift certificates from Nine West, Toni and Guy, Marks and Spencer, The Spa, Body Shop, Paseo Uno in Mandarin Oriental, The Farm in Lipa, Batangas and a FREE accommodation at the Manila Peninsula valued at P15,000 each, just by sending MMS of them frolicking in the sun, surf and sand to their family and friends both here and abroad.

For the Grand Draw on April 8, 2004, five lucky Globe MMS subscribers will each take home either a Nokia 6220 or an all expense paid trip for four to one of these top Philippine summer getaways: Boracay, Palawan, Bohol or Davao.

So far, three lucky Globe Handyphone subscribers have won cool and fantastic prizes from the myGlobe Escapade promo. Claribel Calvario won a Nine West Gift certificate worth P10,000. Jhan Dominic Hosillos and Nikki King each decided to have their P15,000 worth of gift certificate converted to cash. More Globe subscribers can win these hot prizes until the promo ends on April 6, 2004. Another fun and unique way to stay connected with friends and loved ones during the summer holidays is by constantly dropping an MMS greeting card into their mobile handsets. myGlobe MMS Escapade has a gallery of MMS colored wallpapers of the Care Bears, Ziggy and Anitoons, among others. Sending one or all of myGlobe Escapade color wallpapers to that special person gives you a chance to win fantastic prizes.

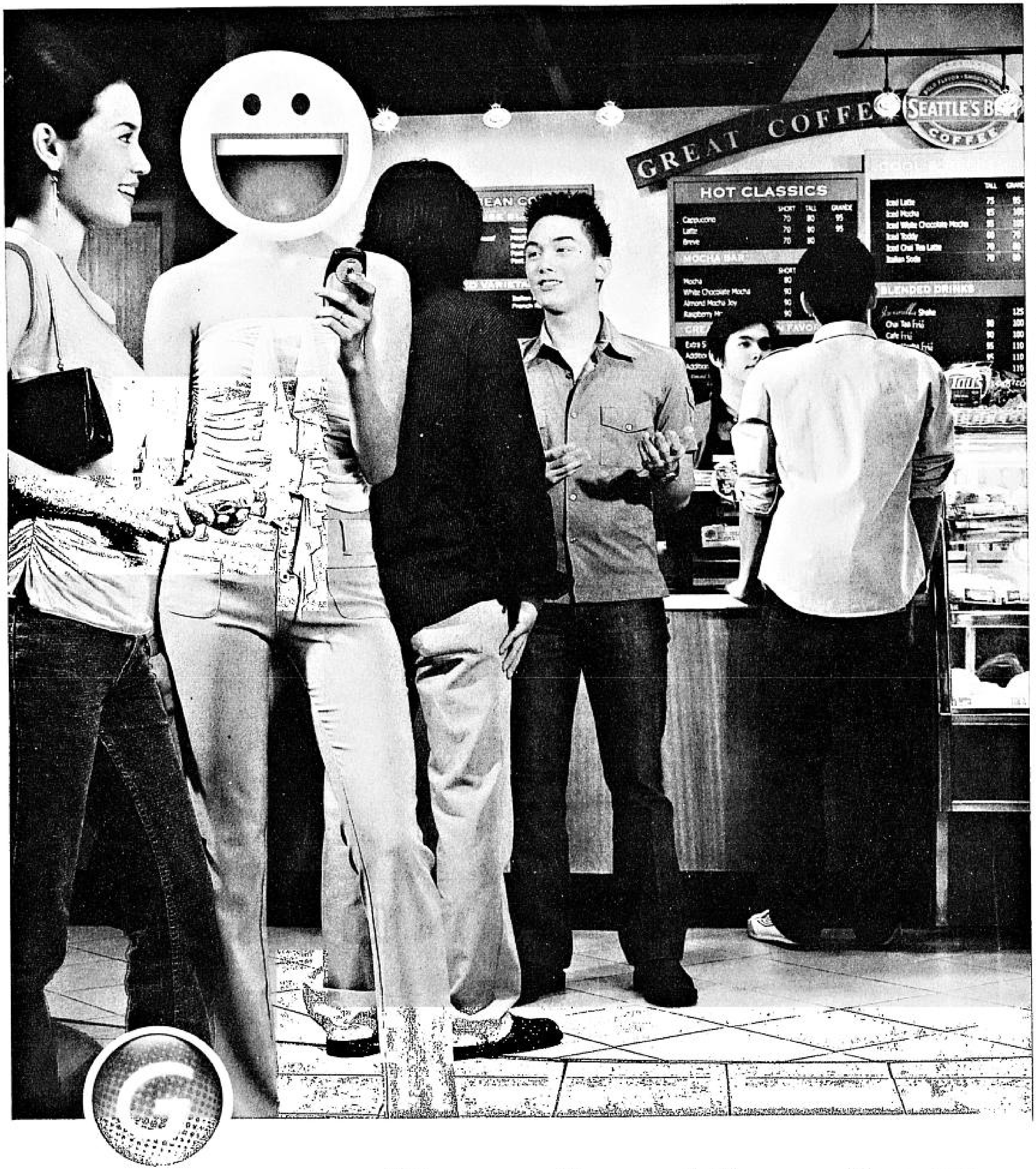
Only myGlobe lets you win fantabulous prizes this summer season! Get clicking with your Globe Handyphone and shoot your way to a cool, fun with myGlobe MMS summer Escapade!

Globe pioneers live mobile TV viewing with myGlobe G-TV

JUST a year after Globe Handyphone pioneered Video Streaming in the Philippines, the leading lifestyle innovator has already used this application to develop yet another life-enhancing service: myGlobe G-TV, which allows Globe subscribers to watch their favorite local television programs on their mobile phones.

Globe has partnered with the country's top television networks, so that viewers of ABS-CBN and GMA-7's programs may tune in to their favorite local shows wherever they may be in the Philippines. While this service is initially available to Globe Plan subscribers with streaming capable handsets such as the Nokia 6600, 3650, 3660 and 7650 with RealOne Player, this new service opens up exciting new possibilities for mobile infotainment. "Now, our subscribers can catch their favorite programs or be the first to hear breaking news even when they're out of their homes and are on-the-go" said Ane V. Guzman, Globe Senior Marketing Manager for Value Added Services.

This latest development from Globe is in keeping with the mobile network's pioneering stance. After all, Globe was the first to introduce SMS or what has come to be called text messaging, MMS and a host of other life-enhancing mobile services. Powered by Globe's cutting-edge technology, this first-of-its-kind service is easy enough to access and even easier to use. For subscribers whose streaming service is already activated, all they need to do is go to the myGlobe WAP site, click on myGlobe G-TV under "What's New," select their desired channel and they can start enjoying G-TV. Globe Plan subscribers who want to activate G-TV on their handsets can simply call 730-1000 or 211 from their Globe Handyphone toll-free. Subscribers with a Nokia 7650 handset can download their RealOne player from www.myglobe.com.ph into their computers so that they can install it on their handsets.



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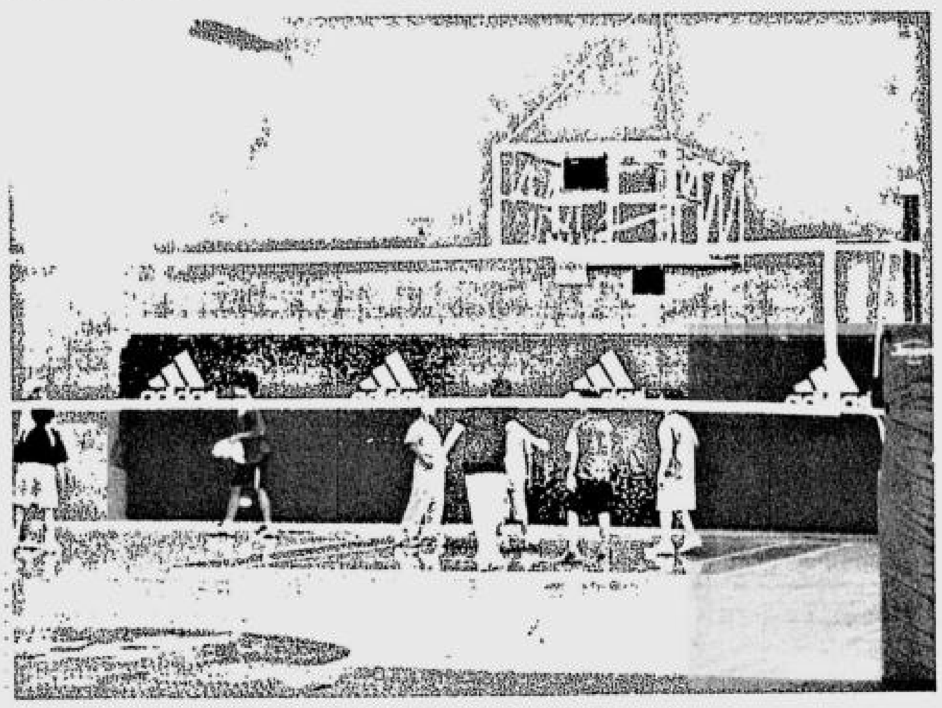

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All-sport camp is for all ages, too

By Beia Formoso

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Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.
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Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

My family has been enrolled under MEDICard for a long time now. My son's membership will be expiring soon, as he will be turning 22 years old within two months time. Is there a way for him to continue his MEDICard membership even if he has reached the exit age?

Yes, there is. At least two weeks prior to your son's card expiry, inform MEDICard in writing of your intention to continue his HMO program. He may renew his policy, not anymore as your dependent, but rather as a principal member. His "renewal" must be accomplished within a prescribed duration for your son to enjoy his original policy effectivity. Otherwise, he will be given a new effectivity date based on the day he has settled his membership premium. The membership rates may vary subject to the room and board type chosen.

Meet your MEDICard Team

The team leader of all accredited doctors in Greg Hospital located at Gen. Luna corner Dilitiwan St. in Sariaya, Quezon is Medical Coordinator **Dr. Anna Andaman-Villanueva.** Doc Ana, as her patients have become fond of calling her, specializes in Obstetrics and Gynecology. She finished her studies in Medicine at FEU-Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation and took her residency for her specialization at San Juan De Dios Hospital in Pasay City. She is a member of the Philippine Obstetrics and Gynecology Society and the Philippine Medical Association. For all your medical needs at Greg Hospital, visit Doktora Villanueva at the hospital's OPD clinic.

At the Alabang Medical Center, MEDICard members can seek the services of Pediatrician **Dr. Maria Ana Lina De Silva-Domingo.** Dr. Domingo, a Medicine graduate of Perpetual Help College has over 9 years of clinical experience. She took her residency training in General Pediatrics at Dr. Jose R. Reyes Memorial Hospital and is an active member of the Philippine Pediatric Society. For all your consultation needs, visit Dr. Domingo's clinic at Room 415, every Mondays and Fridays, 2 to 4 PM and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 AM to 1 in the afternoon. Alabang Medical Center is located at the Alabang-Zapote Road, Muntinlupa City.

Meet **Dr. Janet T. Asoy,** MEDICard accredited OB Gynecologist based in Cebu branch of Friendly Care Clinic. Doc Janet, a graduate of the Gullas College of Medicine joined the HMO in 1999. She is a Diplomate of the Philippine Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, a Fellow of the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society and a member of the Philippine Medical Association. For your consultation needs, visit her clinic located at the ground floor of GMC Plaza Bldg., Legaspi Extension, Cebu City from 9 AM to 1 PM every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 812-8360, 817-5136 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031.

TEXT MEDICARD: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N' Text).
VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asia Pacific Region to be ISO CERTIFIED

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All-sport camp is f

From page D1

tise with the local community, and where people of all ages can simply have fun.

And fun was exactly what everyone who attended the Sports Kamp's opening last Thursday had. Philippine Basketball Association star Enrico Villanueva, players of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines, whole families, boys and girls, young and old alike tried every activity at the spacious, fully-equipped facility in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

At the top of everyone's list were the automated batting cages, which are the first in the country. Built by Bill Bennet, a baseball and softball instructor with over 30 years of coaching experience, the baseball cages, softball cage and all-purpose cage have adjustable pitching machines, making them ideal for all ages and skills. The cages can be rented by the hour or through token play (a cycle of 10 balls per token), bats and safety helmets included. A great form of recreation for the whole family, it can be quite addicting and is considered a good stress buster.

NBA-class accessories

Of course, a sports facility in the Philippines wouldn't be complete without a basketball court. Guests got to experience firsthand the fully air-conditioned indoor basketball court with accessories used in the American National Basketball Association (NBA) like maple wood flooring by Robbins and tempered glass backstop and toque flex ring, both by Porter. It's also convertible for use in other sports like volleyball, badminton and martial arts, and fitness regimens like aerobics and yoga.

The 750-sq-m unbound playing field saw a lot of action, as kids couldn't get enough of playing dino soccer. The open field is good for any sport, such as touch football, kickball, outdoor volleyball and ultimate Frisbee. It can also be used for wall climbing, tetherball, stratus volleyball and ropes course.

State-of-the-art

However, there's more than just fun and games at the Sports Kamp, with its state-of-the-art training facility that includes a 25-meter track surface, netted functional training shock-absorbing plyometric flooring, air-conditioning—all designed for year-round sports training.

An in-house sports medicine clinic is designed to scientifically track progress and diagnose areas of improvement.

As Asia's premiere athletic training
Adidas Sports Kamp boasts of being t
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Acceleration Sports Training System,
that provides individualized, scien
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Sports Training, including stars Tracy
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Laurel and Crispy Santamaria-Laurel

TAGUIG Mayor Siegfrido Tinga trying the batting cage

Nature spirits and the

Part II

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

PARACELSUS classified nature spirits or elementals according to the four elements they inhabit, i.e. air, fire, water and earth.

Air elementals are called sylphs or *sylvestres*.

Fire elements are salamanders or *vulcani*.

Water elements are nymphs or *undines*. Sirens are water elementals.

Earth elementals are dwarves or gnomes.

The elementals were created before humans. Their line of evolution is from gnomes to angelic creatures, whereas the human's line of evolution is from animal nature to divinity. And there is a great variety in their forms, habitats and characters.

What is the purpose of their being?

According to Paracelsus, they exist to guard and protect the treasures in their respective elements. The gnomes and elves protect the treasures under the earth; the nymphs, the treasures of the seas; the sylphs, the treasures of the atmosphere; and the salamanders, the treasures in volcanoes and hot springs.

This is why treasure hunting is seldom successful. A treasure hunter will never be able to get the treasures of the earth and water unless their elemental protectors give them to him.

I've known cases of treasures found under the earth that could not be brought to the surface because the dwarves are holding them back.

Elementals also protect the environment and help in the balance of nature. They make the plants grow abundantly, the air clean and the waters full of fish.

According to Paracelsus, "Nymphs appear in human form and clothing, are beautiful and eager to tempt by their art. (These are probably the *engkantadas* or enchanted beings in Philippine folklore and mythology). The forest people (gnomes, *kapres* and *dwendes*) are shy and unstable. The salamanders are often seen in fiery form. (These are probably the Santelmo or St. Elmo's Fire). They are seen floatin
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ADIDAS Sports Kamp Medicine Clinic

their lives.

The Adidas Sports Kamp can also organize sports-oriented events, functions and parties for companies, schools, organizations and families.

Adidas Sports Kamp is at the 28th Street corner Libertad Drive, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila. Call (632) 816-0951 or e-mail sportskamp@yahoo.com.

> Athletes can receive professional training, international sports celebrities can share their expertise, and people can simply have fun

Goody
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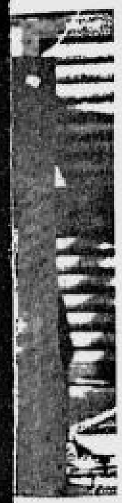
ADIDAS Phils. marketing director Angelica Suiza and general manager for sales Bing Paras at the dino soccer



BILL Velasco and Anthony Suntay

ADIDAS' John Alonte

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Continues Paracelsus: "All elementals have the greatest power when they are near to their proper element. If a man has a nymph for a wife, she must be kept away from water, or she may vanish: Nor must he offend her upon or near water. If they happen to be on a boat and he offends her, she will throw herself overboard and disappear. She might as well be dead for him. He never will see her again. Yet she is not dead, and he still is wedded to her. He cannot lawfully take another wife, for he is not divorced. He is bound to her for eternity, though she has departed from husband and children. If the man should nevertheless take another wife, the nymph will kill him, which has happened many times."

This does not seem to be fair or reasonable, does it? That's why there is really need for further research into the realm of the elementals so we can have a better understanding of their real nature and their interactions with humans.

Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 7-8:30 p.m.

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Hair Loss?
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As a woman, you can also suffer from excessive hair loss that can leave damaging effects to your image and self-esteem. The loss of your lush "crowning glory" may lead you to feel hopeless and insecure about the way you look. At **Svenson International,** we will put your hair-loss worries to rest. Our treatments are proven effective to stop the main cause of hair loss, hasten the re-growth process and maintain your hair's naturally thick and healthy condition.

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Woman AT Svenson

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Just say 'Yes'

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

IT'S a word that removes all obstacles, overcomes barriers and opens the door to possibilities. "Yes" can come spontaneously, springing from instinct or a willing heart; or deliberately, after much thought.

According to the "Book of Wellness," say yes when/to…

Life. Each morning as you get up, welcome the day with enthusiasm and hope. Often your day will end as you begin it, as positively or negatively as you embrace it. An affirmation: "I invite blessings into my life today."

Love. It is a gift. Consider it a blessing to have somebody special who loves you and, more importantly, that you love. In all its expressions, love—for family, community, humanity—is always a boon, never a bane. But the true object of love, as philosophers are wont to say, is simply to just love.

Opportunity. This is literally an open door inviting you to step into a new world of promises. So when the chance comes to change your life for the better, say yes! It may never present itself again.

Work. Better to be busy doing something you enjoy. Better to be busy and get paid for it than not to work at all. Studies have shown that those who keep busy enjoy longevity.

Vacation. While work is good, everyone needs a break. Make time to plan your vacation. Rest and relaxation are prescriptions for a healthy life. Why not write down your dream vacation then work to make it happen?

A new makeover. Who says you have no right to change the way you look? Maybe the hairstyle you've had for decades needs perking up. Or that old suited-up look just doesn't bring out your best. Go ahead, be bold in choosing a new look. You deserve it.

Heart-friendly food. Being conscious about what you eat is the same as being aware. When you are careful, then your eating habits will change for the better. And the immediate results? Weight loss, body strength, more radiant skin, a lighter disposition.

Veggies and fruits. They are your best defense against illness. The antioxidants they provide will boost your immune system and even delay the aging process.

Exercise. It is the best daily or thrice weekly regimen for you. Take up a new sport today.

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

Laughter. People who are naturally cheerful can make you laugh. Choose company that will lift your spirits. Better yet, don't take yourself too seriously. Learn to laugh at yourself.

Red wine. A glass or two (not more) a day is good for the heart. Studies have shown that red wine has enzymes that can help prevent certain heart ailments.

Bee pollen. Fresh and organic, just ¼ tsp will boost your energy.

Blessings. Sometimes you can be pleasantly surprised by gifts or breaks that come your way. Whether they're material or spiritual, accept them (unless they come with a price tag). It is said that when the universe provides, accept it with gratitude—because it opens your heart to more graces.

Newness. When was the last time you did something new for the first time? Get rid of the rigidity and predictability of your life. Expand your experience. Make new friends, learn a new skill or hobby, travel to an exotic destination… This is the secret to staying young.

God. Align your spirit with your Creator. Though challenging, when you walk with the Spirit, your path is enlightened.

Yourself. Be good to yourself. It's time. Maybe you've been overcritical/judgmental of yourself. Try to see yourself as someone deserving of pampering and nurturing. Affirm: "I am special. And I deserve the best."

Lift-me-up tea

20 leaves lemon grass (*tanglad*)
Hot water
3 tsp honey

To prepare the lemon grass, place fresh leaves in an oven and bake 12 hours on low heat. Or dry in the sun for 15 hours. Put two dried leaves in a pot of hot water. Mix in honey. Serve hot when liquid turns gold or add ice cubes and blend. Drink up!

Love and light!

BOB Oliver, general manager of Timex Assembly plant in Cebu, wears Timex Reefgear.

Patron of his own watches

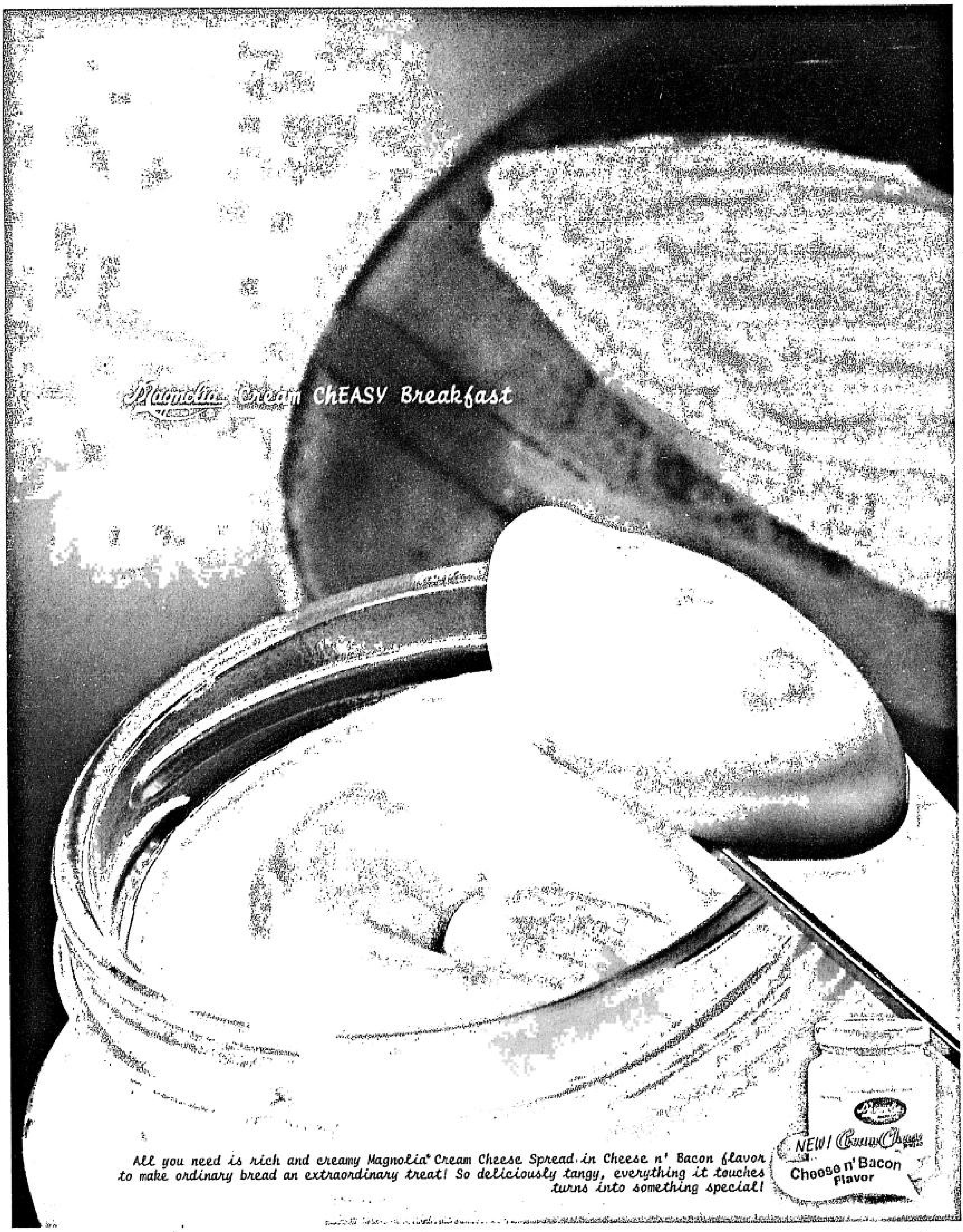
TIME may be crucial, especially if you are the big boss of a company that deals with time like Jose Santana, president and chief executive officer of Timex Corp.

As head of Timex, Santana is responsible for maintaining the watch brand as the United States' No. 1 label. Aiming for the fickle youth market, he advocates innovation, keeps track of trends and makes sure that Timex products have an edge in style and technology.

But Santana also knows how to take a break and has passion for the outdoors. The last time he was in Cebu, site of one of Timex's largest assembly plants, he found time for a couple of dives, exploring the depths of Philippine waters. Trying free diving (a diver goes as deep as possible and back with no equipment except mask and fins), he relied on the depth meter of his Timex Helix Watch to make sure he was not at risk.

The Helix Watch and the Reefgear are the favorite dive watches of Santana, who likes trying his own products.

TIMEX president and CEO Joe Santana



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